Little-known facts

1 Reading

A Do you know an interesting fact about a famous person? Tell the class.

B Read the biographies. Which fact do you think is most interesting about each person?

Five things you didn't know about . . .

① King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz
King of Saudi Arabia

1. King Abdullah was born in Riyadh in 1924.

2. He is the sixth King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He became King on August 1, 2005.

3. As a young man, he spent years living with the Bedouin. He learned their values of simplicity, honor, generosity, and bravery.

4. King Abdullah has traveled to many countries and met with many heads of state. He made a world tour in 1998 with visits to the United States, Britain, France, South Korea, China, and Japan.

5. The King is an accomplished horseman and breeds Arabian horses. He established an equestrian club in Riyadh. He is a great reader and has founded libraries in the Kingdom and in Morocco.

② Farouq Alzouman
First Saudi to climb Mt. Everest

1. On May 21, 2008, 30-year-old Farouq Alzouman reached the summit of Mt. Everest. Alzouman became the first Saudi to climb the world's highest mountain.

2. Alzouman's interest in mountain climbing began when he lived in Oregon. He has climbed several of the world's highest mountain peaks.

3. This outstanding sportsman and athlete has a black belt in tae kwon do. He also swims and plays soccer. His father introduced him to sports as a very young boy.

4. Alzouman works for a public relations firm in Saudi Arabia.

5. Alzouman is very supportive of young people. He encourages them to follow their dreams.

③ Alex Rodriguez
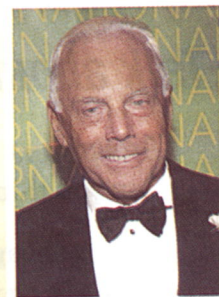Baseball player, New York Yankees

1. Alex Rodriguez was born in New York City, but he lived in the Dominican Republic for four years and learned to play baseball there.

2. He's a fantastic athlete but also very humble. Everyone agrees — he's a really nice guy!

3. He's generous with his time and money. He created an educational program called Grand Slam for Kids to help children improve their academic skills.

4. He loves to shop for nice clothes. Armani is his favorite designer.

5. He has impeccable grooming habits. He gets a haircut every ten days, and has a manicure and pedicure every month.

④ Giorgio Armani
Fashion designer

1. Giorgio Armani was born on July 11, 1934 in Piacenza, Italy, near Milan, the heart of the Italian fashion industry.

2. Armani did a number of things before he became a fashion designer. He spent two years in medical school, was a photographer, was in the military, and worked at a department store.

3. He worked for an Italian designer in 1961 and learned about fashion. In 1970, he started to work on his own.

4. His clothes are versatile and beautifully designed. An Armani jacket looks good with jeans or at a special event.

5. Armani's company now makes everything from clothing to eyeglasses and perfumes. He is demanding, but lots of young designers want to learn from him.

C *Pair work* Which person would you most like to meet? Why?

1 Reading

A Do you ever read "blogs," or Web logs, on the Internet? Are you a "blogger"? Do you know anyone who writes an online journal? Tell the class.

B Read the two blogs. Which blogger's experiences are the most interesting to you? Why?

Joshua's Blog

Greetings from the Galápagos

Puerto Ayora, Ecuador (Galápagos Islands)
Saturday, November 20, 2004

All is well in Puerto Ayora. I have been very busy. In the last three weeks, I have snorkeled and been scuba diving with giant green turtles, sea lions, penguins, and numerous species of tropical fish. I've wandered over fields of black volcanic rocks, through rocky beaches teeming with fat, lazy iguanas and red, yellow, and blue crabs. I've seen giant Galápagos tortoises and all sorts of rare birds.

I'm flying back to Quito on Tuesday. After that, I plan to go to Peru.

Posted by Joshua on November 20, 2004, 08:28 p.m.

Steve's Blog

I'M IN ATHENS!

Thursday, June 10, 2004
Well, after 24 hours of travel, I have landed in Greece! Athens is beautiful! The most incredible experience I've had today is figuring out that I can read! I have spent all of about two hours over the past month studying the Greek alphabet, but I was amazed to find out once I got here that I can actually read Greek! I didn't realize how quickly I was learning the Greek alphabet. My cab driver probably thought I was crazy because I was reading every sign and asking him if I was right.

Thursday, June 17, 2004
As for the island of Lesvos, well, it's perfect . . . absolutely perfect. I have been all around the world, and I think that it is the most beautiful place I have ever been. The sea is so crystal clear that you can see your shadow in water 10 meters deep. The beaches are incredible, and there are these amazing little towns nestled in the mountains — every one like it's straight off a postcard.

Posted by Steve on June 10 and June 17, 2004.

C *Pair work* Read the blogs again. Can you find . . .

1. three things Joshua did on his trip?
2. six kinds of wildlife Joshua saw?
3. the reason why Steve was pleased with himself in Athens?
4. three reasons why Steve thought Lesvos was absolutely perfect?

Is that a fact?

1 Reading

A Read the headings of the paragraphs below on world records. Which three facts do you want to read about first? Tell the class.

B Read the facts. Do you know any facts like these about your country?

WORLD RECORDS

The fastest roller coaster . . .
The fastest roller coaster is Kingda Ka at Six Flags Great Adventure in New Jersey, U.S.A. It reaches a speed of 206 kilometers (128 miles) per hour in just four seconds! At 139 meters (456 feet), it's also the tallest roller coaster in the world.

The busiest subway . . .
The Metropolitan in Moscow, Russia, is the busiest subway system. More than 3 billion passengers ride on Moscow's Metro subways each year. It might also be the most beautiful subway system – many of the 150 stations have stained glass, marble statues, and chandeliers.

The most talkative bird . . .
The most proficient talking bird was an African gray parrot named Prudle. It learned over 800 words and could even conduct polite conversation.

The highest mountain range . . .
The world's highest mountain range is the Himalayas. It has 96 of the world's 109 peaks over 7,317 meters (24,000 feet).

The longest escalator . . .
The Central-Mid-Levels Escalator in Hong Kong, China, is the longest escalator in the world. It is 800 meters (2,625 feet) long and climbs 135 meters (443 feet).

The most expensive city . . .
According to the Mercer Human Resource Cost-of-Living Survey, the most expensive city is Tokyo, Japan. The survey compared the cost of goods and services in 144 cities.

The most visited city . . .
Tijuana, Mexico, located on the border with California, U.S.A., is the city with the most visitors. It has about 35 million tourists each year.

The highest city . . .
Wenchuan, China, at an altitude of 5,103 meters (16,730 feet) above sea level, is the world's highest city.

The deadliest animals . . .
The most poisonous amphibian is the poison dart frog, found in Central and South America. The poison in its skin can kill 20 adult humans.

The most poisonous snake is the African black mamba. The poison in one bite can kill 200 humans.

Sources: *Guinness World Records* 2002, 2005; *Scholastic Book of World Records* 2005; www.edmunds.com; themeparks.about.com

Childhood memories

1 Reading

A When you were a kid, did you argue with family members? What about?
Tell the class.

B Read Rhonda's blog. Why did Rhonda and her brother use to argue?

Ron's Blog

RON'S RAMBLINGS

| Home | About Me | Archives | Links |

11/9/2004
Childhood memories

Kids always have to sit in the backseat these days. They can't sit in the front seat because every car now has air bags, and kids might get hurt by these safety devices.

This would have taken a lot of the joy away from my childhood. How many times did my brother and I argue over who got to sit in front? I'm surprised my dad never really implemented a policy. He kind of left it up to us. Once in a while, he would put his foot down and make us take turns. Otherwise, it was a free-for-all. "All" being my brother and I. I recall that at times, the front seat would go to whoever yelled "I call the front!" first. But it had to be after we were outside of the store or the house. We couldn't "call it" while we were still inside.

Sometimes we would determine who got to sit in the front by whoever touched the car first. I inevitably lost in this one because my brother was older and more athletic, and therefore quicker. So, he would tag the car first.

And the other way we would decide who got the front was by arguing over whose turn it was. Of course, we always thought it was our own turn. So, we'd argue about it until one of us gave in, or my dad got frustrated enough to make one of us sit in the back.

Kids nowadays don't even know what they are missing. For my brother and me, arguing over the front seat was an important part of our sibling bonding.

C Find the expressions on the left in the blog. Match each one with a similar expression.

1. implemented a policy _____
2. left it up to us _____
3. put his foot down _____
4. free-for-all _____
5. gave in _____
6. sibling bonding _____

a. demanded something strongly
b. forming a close relationship with a brother / sister
c. agreed to someone's demand
d. made a set of rules
e. let us decide what to do
f. a competition with no rules

Old friends

1 Reading

A Have you lost touch with anyone from your past? Who are they? What do you remember about them? Tell the class.

B Read the article. What does this Web site do?

Web site chaperones[1] classmate reunions

By Jefferson Graham, USA TODAY

When Ray Sears stumbled onto[2] the Classmates.com Web site, which promises to reunite old friends, he found a listing for his old seventh-grade friend Gino, paid the membership fee so he could reconnect, and asked if Gino remembered him. "How could I forget my first friend?" Gino replied.

Fast-forward to today, where the newly reunited friends are planning a hiking trip.

"This is the promise of the Internet," says Sears, 32, a security supervisor at a Los Angeles-area shopping mall. "A simple way for the regular Joes[3] to find people from their past. It's a really neat way of getting back in touch."

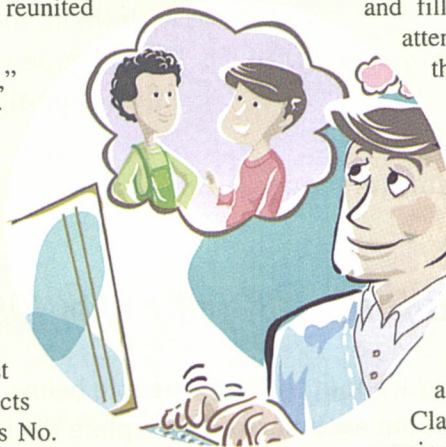Others apparently agree. The number of visitors to Classmates tripled in 2002, making it one of the most popular sites on the Web. It attracts 15 million visitors a month, and ranks No. 20 on Jupiter Media Metrix's list of top-traffic Web sites.

Making connections has been one of the most popular uses of the Internet, whether by e-mail, bulletin board, or instant messaging. But Classmates.com, like many sites, has figured out a way to make people's need to reconnect pay off.

Classmates is a rare dot-com success story, a profitable company with two million paying subscribers who happily fork over[4] $36 a year (just increased from $30) to reach out to former classmates, military colleagues, even long-lost relatives.

How Classmates works: You go to the Web site and fill out forms with your schools, years attended, and other information. Then check the database – 180,000 U.S. schools and 38,000 military units – to see if old pals have also registered. You can see their names, but if you want to make contact, you must first become a paying member. The contacts are made through Classmates' private e-mail system – personal information isn't listed on the site.

Beyond listing schools, the military, and working the reunion markets, Classmates plans to launch a workplace version in the coming months to attract former co-workers who have since lost touch.

1 *chaperones*   supervises
2 *stumbled onto*   found by accident
3 *regular Joes*   ordinary people
4 *fork over*   pay

C Read the article again. Are the sentences true or false? Correct the false sentences.

	True	False
1. Gino didn't remember Ray Sears when Ray contacted him.	☐	☐
2. Gino and Ray are now planning a trip together.	☐	☐
3. Classmates.com helps you find old school friends.	☐	☐
4. You can contact your old friends for free.	☐	☐
5. The Web site doesn't give out your address and telephone number.	☐	☐