

# Gossip is good

Read the article and take note of the key words.

We all love a **gossip**. Even those who **try their utmost** not to tell tales, at some point in their lives, will find themselves having a good **goss**. Those who feel less guilty over talking about people behind their backs will be pleased to know that **academics** have now said it's actually what sets our species apart.

Apparently, gossip is what makes people human, because it allows us to pass on **vital** information on who to trust and who not to trust. It also helps us bond with family and friends.

Professor Robin Dunbar at Oxford University has even said that far from feeling guilty about gossiping, we should accept it as a vital part of human life that might even help us to live longer. He has said the most important thing that will **prevent** you from dying is the size of your social network, and this has a bigger effect than anything, except giving up smoking.

Gossiping is only chatting with people and keeping up-to-date with the social world in which you live. So, gossip is what makes us human. The use of gossip in a negative sense, though, was not seen until the 18th century. It used to be what you did with your friends.

Academics carried out experiments to find out what people thought about gossips themselves. The results were that whilst people distrust those who gossip too much, they were also wary of those who gossip too little.

In evolutionary biology, the **phenomenon** is called the gossip theory, and it suggests that as language developed, it allowed early humans to pass on **reliable** information so that they could live in ever-increasing groups.

Read more: <http://www.newslevels.com/products/gossip-is-good-level-3/>

Match the words with their meanings.

## Key words

gossip  
try their utmost  
goss  
academics  
vital  
prevent  
phenomenon  
reliable

## Meanings

to try very hard  
something you can trust  
researchers and professors  
an event  
when you talk about someone who is not with you  
to keep from happening  
short for gossip  
important

**Answer the questions below.**

Comprehension Questions

1. According to the article, what makes gossip good?
2. What is the most important thing that will prevent people from dying as said by Professor Robin Dunbar?
3. What does gossip theory suggest?
4. Do you like to gossip? Yes or No? Explain your answer.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the common subjects of gossip?
2. How often do you hear gossip?
3. Why do people gossip?
4. How do you feel if people gossip about you?

**Express yourself**

Talk about an interesting gossip to your classmate. Ask your classmates what the gossip is about.

Popular gossiping topics:

- a. money and power
- b. sex and relationships
- c. reputation
- d. celebrities

