

Select Readings, Second Edition
Upper-Intermediate, Chapter 10 Test

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

The Importance of First Impressions

We have all heard the expression, ‘you can’t judge a book by its cover.’ However, it seems that that is exactly what most people do. The human brain seems to be wired in such a way that we make very strong, lasting judgments about the people we meet within the first 30 seconds. And it is true, you may be able learn a lot about a person by their first impression. But can you really learn all you need to know?

Maybe there is something affecting your first impression. Possibly the person is nervous or upset. Maybe you are in a bad mood or not feeling well. All of these factors and more could influence a first impression, so should people place so much weight on it?

Many people feel that a first impression is extremely important. Once those people form an idea of you, it is often difficult for them to get beyond it. If someone feels that you are something you really aren’t because of your first impression, then that is obviously not a good thing.

Yet many people really do still rely deeply on first impressions. One good example is the job interview. We dress nicely for job interviews for a very good reason: to make a good first impression. In addition to our outward appearance, many people tend to put on something of an act. By being extremely polite and showing interest, we feel that we will make a good first impression and have a better chance getting the job.

Is this the way things should be? Probably not. Will this situation ever change? The answer to that question is the same—probably not. It is just human nature to rely on a first impression. Everyone knows that they do it, and most people know that it’s not the right thing to do.

So, what can we do about it? While first impressions are something that we all form, we are all aware that they are probably not very accurate. When a first impression is wrong, it can take quite a long time and a lot of effort to change the way we think about someone. Quite often, changing your impression of someone, especially a negative one, will require a lot of time spent with the person in question. You may need to start from scratch. This will give you time to really get to know them, as well as giving them time to prove that they are not who you thought they were.

Also, remember that the opposite can be true. Someone may have an unrealistically high first impression on you. As you get to know the person, try not to disappoint them, but be sure to eventually show them who you really are.

First impressions are very lasting and usually stick for a while. But remember, it is possible to change the way someone thinks about you and the way you think about

someone else. Take time to really get to know others, and you may realize that first impressions are not nearly as important as most people think.

1. From the author's point of view, _____.
 - A. first impressions are accurate
 - B. first impressions are not accurate
 - C. first impressions never change
 - D. it is not human nature to rely on first impressions
2. True or false? Many people form strong judgments about someone they meet within 30 seconds.
 - A. True
 - B. False
3. According to the article, once people form an opinion of you, it is _____.
 - A. changed automatically
 - B. impossible to modify it
 - C. easy to modify it
 - D. difficult to modify it
4. True or false? The author says it's bad to put on an act when going on a job interview.
 - A. True
 - B. False
5. The author thinks that people will continue to rely on first impressions because _____.
 - A. people refuse to change
 - B. people like to deceive other people
 - C. it's human nature
 - D. it's difficult to change them
6. In paragraph 6, the author suggests that first impressions are usually _____.
 - A. unrealistically high
 - B. unrealistically negative
 - C. not accurate
 - D. disappointing
7. The author says that one thing that may affect how you perceive someone is _____.
 - A. what you are wearing that day
 - B. the time of day
 - C. the other person's mood
 - D. whether you wear glasses
8. The author mentions that all of the following are important to creating a good first impression in a job interview except _____.
 - A. dressing nicely
 - B. being polite to the interviewer
 - C. showing interest in the interviewer
 - D. paying attention to the interviewer's appearance
9. In paragraph 6, 'start from scratch' means _____.
 - A. give new information
 - B. repeat the meeting
 - C. start at the beginning again
 - D. continue where you left off
10. True or false? The author thinks it is possible to change how someone thinks about you.
 - A. True
 - B. False