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# Going viral

WORKSHEET A

The video for the song *Gangnam Style* by South Korean rapper Psy is the latest example of a ‘viral’ video – that is to say a video that quickly becomes extremely popular on the internet. Video sharing websites (such as YouTube), online social networks (such as Facebook) and email allow an enormous number of people to see a video in a short space of time. In the case of *Gangnam Style*, the video was only released in July this year, but has already been watched more than 350 million times on YouTube – a world record. At the moment, worldwide, the video is being watched by an additional 10 million people every day.

Some videos that go viral are professionally produced, as with *Gangnam Style*, but many are scenes people have filmed using their own cameras or mobile phones, sometimes spontaneously. Amusing behaviour by domestic animals or small children seems to feature particularly frequently in the latter category: many people reading this will be able to think of an example.

Whatever it is that has made *Gangnam Style* so popular, it isn’t the lyrics of the song. Psy sings mostly in his native language, Korean, which is unlikely to be understood by the majority of viewers. It’s more likely that people find the music catchy and are amused by Psy’s humorous dancing, including his ‘horse-riding’ moves. Despite the language barrier it is clear that Psy, while coming across as a genuine pop star, does not take himself too seriously.

As with some other viral videos in the past, various parodies of *Gangnam Style* have already been produced and have themselves become quite popular on the internet.

They generally consist of people impersonating Psy in the video but changing the lyrics of the song.

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WORKSHEET B

## Exercise 1

Here are some simple definitions for words that appear in the text on Worksheet A. Find the words they refer to and fill in the gaps.

1. **r \_ \_ e \_ \_ e** (verb): to make a film, video or CD available for people to see or buy
2. If something is done in a natural way without being planned or thought about beforehand, it is done **\_ \_ o \_ \_ an \_ \_ us \_ \_** (adverb).
3. **\_ \_ tt \_ r** (adjective): used for referring to the second of two people, things or groups that have just been mentioned
4. If a tune or phrase is **\_ \_ \_ c \_ y** (adjective) it attracts your attention and is easy to remember.
5. **\_ n \_ \_ m \_ \_ \_** (adjective): very large in size or quantity
6. **f \_ at \_ \_ e** (verb): to be an important part or aspect of something
7. **s \_ e \_ e** (noun): a view that you can see in a picture or film, or from the place where you are
8. **\_ \_ r \_ \_ s** (noun): the words of a song
9. **p \_ \_ \_ d \_** (noun): a literary or musical work that copies another work in a humorous way
10. **\_ \_ \_ it \_ \_ \_ al** (adjective): extra

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WORKSHEET C

## Exercise 2

One word has been taken out of each line of the text. How many of the missing words can you remember?

- (1) The video for the song *Gangnam Style* by South rapper Psy is the latest
- (2) example of a 'viral' video – that is to a video that quickly becomes
- (3) extremely popular the internet. Video sharing websites (such as YouTube),
- (4) online social (such as Facebook) and email allow an enormous number
- (5) of people to see a video in a short of time. In the case of *Gangnam Style*, the
- (6) video was only released in July this, but has already been watched more than
- (7) 350 million on YouTube – a world record. At the moment, worldwide, the
- (8) video is being watched an additional 10 million people every day.
- (9) Some videos that viral are professionally produced, as with *Gangnam Style*, but
- (10) many are scenes people have filmed using own cameras or mobile phones,
- (11) sometimes spontaneously. Amusing behaviour by domestic or small children
- (12) seems to feature particularly frequently the latter category: many people
- (13) reading this will be able to of an example.
- (14) Whatever it is that has made *Gangnam Style* so popular, it isn't the lyrics the
- (15) song. Psy sings mostly in his native, Korean, which is unlikely to be understood
- (16) by the of viewers. It's more likely that people find the music
- (17) catchy and amused by Psy's humorous dancing, including his 'horse-riding'
- (18) moves. the language barrier it is clear that Psy, while coming
- (19) across as a genuine pop, does not take himself too seriously.
- (20) As with some other viral in the past, various parodies of *Gangnam Style*
- (21) have already been produced and themselves become quite popular on the
- (22) internet. They generally of people impersonating Psy in the video but
- (23) changing the lyrics of the.