

Listening 1

Presenter: Next on the programme we have an interview with someone who has been writing a book about high-achieving teenagers. Welcome, Louise Hardy.

Louise: Hi, it's lovely to be here.

Presenter: Louise, many of these teenagers who have achieved success and fame early on have done so through using new technology, haven't they? Through blogging or using YouTube or Twitter?

Louise: Absolutely, and the greatest example of this is Justin Bieber. As I think everyone on the planet knows, he started off by posting videos on YouTube at the age of 14 and was spotted by a talent scout who worked with the R&B singer Usher. After that he very rapidly became a worldwide sensation.

Presenter: I heard that last year he was said to be more influential than Obama!

Louise: (*laughs*) Yes, that was because he is number one on Twitter. He has over 35 million followers. There's a new one every two seconds. A company that analyses social media called Klout said that he is the most influential person in the world because of that. But whether he's really more influential than Obama, well ...

Presenter: Mmmm. All this exposure has negative consequences for young people too, doesn't it?

Louise: Yes. Although millions adore Justin, a lot of people don't. One of his videos was the most disliked ever. And he has a big problem with privacy. He's followed everywhere by the paparazzi, and that's bad for anyone, never mind a teenager.

Presenter: OK, let's turn to a very different teenager. Tavi Gevinson was even younger when she began, wasn't she?

Louise: Yes, she was only eleven years old when she started a fashion blog called Style Rookie. By the way, for British listeners, 'Rookie' is an American word used for a person who is new to something.

Presenter: Thanks.

Louise: On her blog she posted photos of herself wearing unusual combinations of clothes and wrote about them.

Presenter: Some of them were quite weird.

Louise: Well, yes, I suppose a lot of high fashion is weird. Anyway, she quickly built up a huge following, up to 300,000 readers per day, and many of them were adults. Serious fashion magazines interviewed her and sent her to fashion shows in Europe and to meet top designers, like Karl Lagerfeld.

Presenter: Some people didn't believe she was as young as she was, did they?

Louise: No. One magazine printed an article saying the writer didn't believe Tavi was only 12, and that upset her. But she bounced back and continued blogging. Then, as she grew older, Tavi became interested in other things besides fashion. In 2011, when she was 15, she started Rookie Magazine, an online magazine for teenagers. In less than a week it had one million readers.

Presenter: I've seen it. It's very impressive, isn't it? All teenage girls listening, check out Rookie Magazine.

Louise: Yes, I think it's fantastic and Lady Gaga called Tavi 'the future of journalism'! She employs about 50 writers and photographers – both adults and teenagers – on Rookie, but she is the editor with overall control.

Presenter: And all this time she's continued to lead a normal life, hasn't she?

Louise: Oh yes. She lives a very normal life in a small town and goes to school and so on. She's not even twenty yet. But I think writing and editing are very different from being a performing artist. There's a lot less pressure from fans and the press. Although some actors, like Emma Watson, seem to manage a private life and getting a normal education.

Presenter: Yes, Emma Watson is now in her twenties, of course, but ...

Listening 2

Jill: Hi Martin, sorry I'm late. Gina not here yet?

Martin: Hi Jill — no, but don't worry. I've been reading this article about difficult personality types, like a know-it-all, or a wet blanket — it's quite interesting.

Jill: Oh yeah? Did they mention my wonderful flat mate?

Martin: Why? What do you mean?

Jill: Oh, he's such a slob ... Haven't you met him?

Martin: Well yes, I know he looks a bit of a mess, but I thought he was just trying to be 'cool', with his ripped jeans and scruffy ponytail.

Jill: No, but it's not just his clothes or the fact that he never combs his hair ... you should see his bedroom!

Martin: Untidy, is it?

Jill: Huh! That's an understatement — you can't see the floor, there's so much stuff all over it. And he's always leaving his dirty coffee cups all over the place, and half eaten sandwiches — I nearly sat on one the other day. Ugh!

Martin: Can't you get him to tidy the place up?

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Jill: I try, but he just says he'll do it later — he can't be bothered to get off the sofa for anything — he really has doing nothing down to a fine art. Anyway, did you find someone for the room in your place?

Martin: Yes, we did — but it's a bit of a sore point.

Jill: Oh yeah? Why's that?

Martin: Well, this guy came round to see the place and have a chat, so we could see if we thought we'd all get on, you know — and Lisa liked him, but I thought he was a real bore.

Jill: Really? Oh dear.

Martin: Yes, exactly — he spent most of the time he was there talking about himself, going on and on about the football team he supports, how he watches them every weekend, how he plays himself on Sunday mornings, blah, blah ... I mean, he didn't seem interested in finding out about us at all!

Jill: What a pain!

Martin: Yes ... and now I've got to share a flat with him and get bored to death.

Jill: Because Lisa wanted him to move in?

Martin: Yeah ... I think it was something to do with the fact that he's six feet tall and has piercing blue eyes.

Jill: Well, you must admit, it's your own fault for letting her get her own way.

Martin: I know, I just didn't ...

Gina: Hi ... so sorry. I got 'caught' by my next door neighbour just as I was leaving — she wanted to know where I was going, who I was meeting, and so on, and then started telling me some ridiculous story she'd heard about the people who've just moved in down the road ...

Jill: Sounds like a bit of a busybody.

Gina: Yeah, she really is ... She can be quite rude, too — she had the cheek to ask me if my mum minded me wearing such short skirts — I mean, what business is it of hers? I should have stood up to her, I know ...

Martin: It probably wouldn't be worth it — people like that can't help themselves, and they're quite harmless really. She probably hasn't got anything better to do.

Gina: I suppose you're right. She must get bored sitting at home on her own all day. Anyway, what film are we going to see? Have you decided?