

Listening Comprehension

Instruction: Take 30 seconds to study the task, then listen to the audio file and complete the task.

Task:

Please fill in the blanks (1) to (5) and answer question (6):

Oxford English Dictionary defines doomscrolling as scrolling through and reading (1) _____ news.

Merriam-Webster, meanwhile, linked doomscrolling to its (2) _____ impacts, which include feeling sad, (3) _____ and angry.

Researchers including Seydi Ahmet Satici traced the origin of doom-scrolling to the (4) _____ when people constantly searched for bad news about COVID-19, a behaviour rooted in (5) _____.

6. Which of the following has been used in the audio file to describe doomscrolling?

- A. death and destruction
- B. positive online scrolling
- C. a vicious cycle
- D. an unprecedented challenge

Audio file script:

Doom means “death, destruction, or any terrible situation that cannot be avoided”. “Scroll” means “moving down through text on a screen”. Putting these words together creates ‘doomscrolling’, a word that is as ominous as it sounds.

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, doomscrolling is “the action of constantly scrolling through and reading depressing news on a news site or social media, especially on a phone”.

Linking the common habit with its emotional impact, *Merriam-Webster* defines doomscrolling as “to spend excessive time online scrolling through news or other content that makes one feel sad, anxious, angry, etc”.

The word as defined by the dictionaries was first used in 2020 according to *Merriam-Webster*, which only recognised it as an official word in September 2023.

The behaviour of doomscrolling became a serious concern as it arose from the unique circumstance when the world was under the throes of COVID-19, an unprecedented challenge on both the individual and global levels.

Tracing its troubling origin, authors of a paper, Seydi Ahmet Satıcı et al, noted that doomscrolling was rooted in self-preservation: “Due to the unknown nature of the pandemic, individuals tried to reach every information and news available about COVID-19 via the internet and social media.

The paper noted that uncertain stimuli like pandemics and outbreaks lead individuals to get stuck in uncontrollable and uncomfortable thoughts which can be eased by getting related answers about the unknown. This could keep us scrolling our phones for hours for more information and news, which are primarily negative.

That constant exposure to negative news could take the form of “doomscrolling” which has been described as a vicious cycle that is difficult to break as users get stuck in a pattern of seeking negative information no matter how bad the news is.

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