Socialising and networking

VOCABULARY PRACTICE
ADVANCED | C1

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 Match each advanced term with its definition.

1 homophily ____	**a** the tendency to associate with people similar to oneself
2 weak-tie theory ____	**b** the idea that casual, distant connections often provide unique access to information
3 gatekeeping ____	**c** controlling who has access to a group, resource or opportunity
4 in-group ____	**d** a group one belongs to and identifies with
5 social capital ____	**e** the value derived from social networks and relationships
6 conviviality ____	**f** a warm, sociable and friendly atmosphere
7 rapport ____	**g** a close, harmonious relationship marked by mutual understanding
8 clique ____	**h** a small, exclusive social group that excludes outsiders
9 self-disclosure ____	**i** the act of revealing personal information to another person
10 reciprocity norm ____	**j** the expectation that favours or kindness will be returned

2 Choose the most precise term for each context.

1 The tendency to bond with similar people is homophily / diversity-seeking.

2 The idea that distant contacts offer unique opportunities is weak-tie theory / strong-tie theory.

3 Controlling access to a group or resource is gatekeeping / openness.

4 A group someone identifies with is their in-group / out-group.

5 A warm, friendly social atmosphere is conviviality / hostility.

6 Revealing personal information to build closeness is self-disclosure / concealment.

7 The expectation that kindness will be returned is the reciprocity norm / one-sided generosity.

8 A small, exclusive group is a clique / an open community.

3 Match the verbs with the noun phrases to form academic collocations.

1 cultivate ____	**a** a favour

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2 leverage ____	**b** one's social circle
3 broaden ____	**c** professional connections
4 forge ____	**d** access to a network
5 navigate ____	**e** social capital
6 reciprocate ____	**f** an unfamiliar social setting
7 signal ____	**g** group identity
8 gatekeep ____	**h** genuine rapport

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4 Complete the analysis with terms from the box.

clique | conviviality | gatekeeping | homophily | in-group | rapport | reciprocity norm | self-disclosure | social capital | weak-tie theory

Social network researchers frequently cite 1 _____ to explain why casual acquaintances, rather than close friends, often provide access to new opportunities. This effect is complicated by 2 _____, the tendency of people to cluster with similar others, which can inadvertently limit the diversity of one's network. Within any organisation, informal 3 _____ - deciding who is introduced to key contacts - can quietly reinforce existing hierarchies. Genuine 4 _____ between colleagues, built gradually through small acts of 5 _____ and a functioning 6 _____, tends to prove more durable than networking driven purely by self-interest. An exclusive 7 _____ may offer strong internal 8 _____, but at the cost of limiting members' broader connections. Ultimately, sustained 9 _____ at social events, however trivial it may seem, appears to strengthen the sense of belonging to a given 10 _____.

5 Read the text and answer the questions briefly.

Networks, opportunity and inequality

Research on social capital increasingly examines how unequal access to networks perpetuates broader social inequality. Homophily means that people from disadvantaged backgrounds often have networks composed largely of others in similar circumstances, limiting exposure to the weak ties that research suggests are disproportionately valuable for finding opportunities. Gatekeeping within professional networks can compound this effect, as introductions to influential contacts are often extended informally, favouring those already embedded in well-connected circles. Some organisations have attempted to counter this through structured mentorship programmes, though critics argue that such interventions rarely substitute fully for organic, long-term relationship-building rooted in genuine rapport.

1 What does research on social capital increasingly examine? _____

2 What does homophily mean in this context? _____

3 What can gatekeeping within professional networks compound? _____

4 How are introductions to influential contacts often extended? _____

5 What have some organisations attempted, to counter this effect? _____

6 What do critics argue about such interventions? _____

6 Replace the words in bold with a precise term or collocation.

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1 People tend to connect with others similar to themselves. _____

2 She controlled who had access to the influential group. _____

3 They quickly developed a close, trusting relationship. _____

4 The party had a warm, friendly, sociable atmosphere. _____

OVER TO YOU

Write a 160-190 word critical commentary on how social networks shape access to opportunity, distinguishing observation from inference and evaluating structural and individual explanations.

[ ] Use at least twelve target expressions. [ ] Include four academic collocations. [ ] Maintain a precise, balanced register.

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ANSWER KEY

1 Advanced terms

1 a 2 b 3 c 4 d 5 e 6 f 7 g 8 h 9 i 10 j

2 Precise terms

1 homophily 2 weak-tie theory 3 gatekeeping 4 in-group 5 conviviality 6 self-disclosure 7 the reciprocity norm 8 a clique

3 Academic collocations

1 h cultivate genuine rapport 2 e leverage social capital 3 b broaden one's social circle 4 c forge professional connections
5 f navigate an unfamiliar social setting 6 a reciprocate a favour 7 g signal group identity 8 d gatekeep access to a network

4 Analysis

1 weak-tie theory 2 homophily 3 gatekeeping 4 rapport 5 self-disclosure 6 reciprocity norm
7 clique 8 conviviality 9 self-disclosure/conviviality 10 in-group

5 Reading - suggested answers

1 How unequal access to networks perpetuates broader social inequality.
2 People from disadvantaged backgrounds often have networks composed largely of others in similar circumstances.
3 This effect (limited exposure to valuable weak ties).
4 Informally, favouring those already embedded in well-connected circles.
5 Structured mentorship programmes.
6 That such interventions rarely substitute fully for organic, long-term relationship-building.

6 Precise terms and collocations

1 homophily 2 gatekept 3 rapport 4 conviviality

Over to you

Answers will vary. Look for conceptual precision, evidence-aware reasoning and balanced evaluation.