

A)True

B)False

7. In their natural habitats, animals suffer problems related to human activity.

A)True

B) False

8. Endangered species often lack genetic diversity in their population.

A)True

B)False

Writing:

You are due to start a new job next week but you will not be able to because you have some problems.

Write a letter to your new employer. In your letter:

- explain your situation
- describe your problems
- tell him/her when you think you can start.

Variant 2:

Reading task:

The Gobi is a large desert region in Asia. It covers parts of northern and north- western China, and of southern Mongolia. It occupies an arc of land 1,295,000 km² in area, making it the fifth largest desert in the world. Much of the Gobi is not sandy but is covered with bare rock.

The area is often damaged by farming and off-road vehicles. In Mongolia, grasslands have been damaged by goats that are raised by nomadic farmers as a source of cashmere wool. Recent economic trends, such as more people being allowed to own animals, and problems with city and town economies have caused people to return to rural lifestyles. This movement is the opposite of urbanization.

Currently, the Gobi desert is expanding fast, in a process known as desertification. The expansion is rapid in the south into China, which has seen 3,600 km² of grassland overtaken every year by the Gobi. Dust storms have increased dramatically in the past 20 years, mainly due to desertification.

The expansion of the Gobi comes mostly from human activities such as deforestation, too many farmed animals using the land, and the over-use of water. China has made various plans to try to slow the expansion of the desert. These have had some success, but have made no major impact.

Questions

1. What is the writer's main aim?
 - A. To describe deserts.
 - B. To describe changes in lifestyle.
 - C. To describe the damaged caused to the desert, and by the desert.
 - D. To describe the life of farmers.

2. What is the author's opinion about the human impact on the Gobi?
 - A. It is having a major negative impact.
 - B. It is having a minor impact.
 - C. It is having no impact.
 - D. It is having an impact but this is not important.

3. What does 'It' refer to in the following sentence?
It occupies an arc of land of 1,295,000 km² in area...
 - A. Asia.
 - B. China
 - C. Mongolia
 - D. The Gobi

4. What does 'This movement' refer to in the following sentence?
This movement is the opposite of urbanization.
 - A. The movement of goats.
 - B. The movement of people to the countryside.
 - C. The movement of off-road vehicles.
 - D. The movement of farmers.

5. In recent years, more people are .
A. moving to cities
B. moving to towns
C. moving to the Gobi
D. moving away from the Gobi
6. People in towns and cities are .
A. getting richer
B. buying farms
C. damaging the Gobi
D. leaving to live in the countryside
7. The Gobi desert is
A. getting bigger
B. getting smaller
C. staying the same size
D. getting hotter
8. Dust storms are ... 20 years ago.
A. happening less often than
B. happening more often than
C. happening at the same rate as
D. becoming stronger than
9. China has ... of desertification.
A. stopped the problem
B. caused the problem
C. not been interested in the problem
D. reduced the problem
10. Which is the best title for the text?
A. The size of the Gobi desert.
B. The people of the Gobi desert.
C. The effect of humans on the Gobi desert.
D. Animals' effect on the Gobi desert.

Writing Task:

On a recent holiday you lost a valuable item. Fortunately you have travel insurance to cover the cost of anything lost.

Write a letter to the manager of your insurance company. In your letter:

- Describe the item you lost
- Explain how you lost it.
- Tell the insurance company what you would like them to do.

Variant 3:

Reading task:

Yale University is a private university located in the United States in New Haven, Connecticut. Founded in 1701 in the Colony of Connecticut, the university is the third oldest institution of higher education in the United States. Yale has produced many famous former students, including five US presidents.

Yale was transformed, beginning in the early 1930s, by the introduction of colleges where students can live as well as study. Taking medieval English universities such as Oxford and Cambridge as its model, this distinctive system divides the undergraduate population into 12 separate communities of approximately 450 members each. This system means that Yale can offer its students a friendly small- college environment as well as all the study resources and facilities found at a major research university.

Today, Yale is considered to be one of the world's great universities. Its 11,000 students come from all 50 American states and from 108 countries. More than 3,200 members of staff teach and do research at the university and many are considered to be leaders in their subjects. International students have gone to Yale since the 1830s, when the first Latin American student enrolled. Today, international students make up nearly 9% of undergraduates, and 16% of all students at the university. International studies and exchanges play an increasingly important role at Yale.

Questions:

1. Two US universities are older than Yale.
 - A. True
 - B. False
 - C. Does not say

2. The current US president went to Yale.
 - A. True
 - B. False
 - C. Does not say

3. The structure of Yale is based on new UK universities.
 - A. True
 - B. False
 - C. Does not say

4. All students live in the college.
 - A. True
 - B. False
 - C. Does not say

5. The university does not have good resources.
 - A. True
 - B. False
 - C. Does not say

6. Students from Saudi Arabia study at Yale.
 - A. True
 - B. False
 - C. Does not say

7. All teachers at Yale are leaders in their subjects.
 - A. True
 - B. False
 - C. Does not say

8. International students have studied at Yale for nearly 200 years.
 - A. True
 - B. False
 - C. Does not say

9. More international students study at undergraduate level than at postgraduate level.
 - A. True
 - B. False
 - C. Does not say

10. Students from Yale can go to other countries for part of their study.

- A. True
- B. False
- C. Does not say

Writing:

You travelled by plane last week and your suitcase was lost. You have still heard nothing from the airline company.

Write to the airline and

- explain what happened
- describe your suitcase and tell them what was in it
- find out what they are going to do about it

Variant 4

Reading Task:

Paragraph 1

The beachfront area where the Burj Al Arab and Jumeirah Beach Hotel are located was previously called Chicago Beach. The hotel is (5) located on an island of reclaimed land off the beach of the former Chicago Beach Hotel.

Paragraph 2

Construction of Burj Al Arab began in 1994. It was built in an unusual (6) style. It looks like the sail of a dhow, a type of Arabian vessel. The (7) architect Tom Wright stated that the client wanted a building that would become an iconic or symbolic statement for Dubai, similar to Sydney's Opera House, or the Eiffel Tower in Paris.

Paragraph 3

Burj Al Arab is the world's second tallest hotel. Despite its size, the Burj Al Arab has only 28 double-storey (8) floors which accommodate 202 bedroom suites. The smallest suite occupies an area of 169 m² the largest covers 780 m².

Paragraph 4

Many people are impressed with the building, but it has also attracted criticism. Although the hotel is a fantastic example of modern (9) construction technology, and shows great imagination, many people think it is just a display of (10) wealth. For a lot of people the Burj Al Arab hotel symbolizes money more than architectural beauty.

Questions:

1. Choose the correct heading for paragraph 1.
 - A. The hotel location.
 - B. The beach.
 - C. The sea.
 - D. The Chicago Beach Hotel.

2. Choose the correct heading for paragraph 2.
 - A. The hotel design.
 - B. The architect.
 - C. Famous buildings.
 - D. Beginning the building.

3. Choose the correct heading for paragraph 3.
 - A. Rooms in the hotel.
 - B. The height of the hotel.
 - C. Features of the hotel.
 - D. The age of the hotel.

4. Choose the correct heading for paragraph 4.
 - A. Wealth.
 - B. Design.

- C. Technology.
- D. Opinions.

5. Match the underlined word or phrase with a definition.

- A. Situated.
- B. Local.
- C. Locally.
- D. Near.

6. Match the underlined word or phrase with a definition.

- A. Method.
- B. Technique.
- C. Design.
- D. Luxury.

7. Match the underlined word or phrase with a definition.

- A. A design.
- B. A designer.
- C. An arch.
- D. A building.

8. Match the underlined word or phrase with a definition.

- A. Ground.
- B. Flooring.
- C. Bases.
- D. Levels.

9. Match the underlined word or phrase with a definition.

- A. Building.
- B. Industry.
- C. Business.
- D. Production.

10. Match the underlined word or phrase with a definition.

- A. Large quantity.
- B. Variety.
- C. Riches.
- D. Choice.

Writing:

You want to sell some of your furniture. You think a friend of yours might like to buy it from you.

Write a letter to your friend. In your letter

- explain why you are selling
- describe the furniture
- suggest a date when your friend can come and see the furniture

Variant 5

Reading Task:

The Sahara is the world's largest hot desert. At over 9,400,000 km² it covers most of northern Africa, making it almost as large as Europe. The only larger desert in the world is Antarctica, classified as such due to its very low rainfall.

A recent UN report has stated that tens of millions of people could be driven from their homes by the growing deserts, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and central Asia. The main reason for this is desertification, the process by which a desert gets bigger. This is becoming a global environmental problem, currently affecting an estimated 100 to 200 million people, and threatening the lives and livelihoods of a much larger number.

The overuse of land and water are making matters worse, while climate change is also a major factor damaging the soil. The UN report suggests that new farming practices, such as encouraging forests, are simple measures that could prevent the spread of deserts. It recommends offering support to people who live in desert areas. Mr Adeel, a farmer living on the edge of the Sahara agrees with the report. He said, "We need to provide different ways to make a living – not traditional farming but new ways to make money which don't put pressure on natural resources."

Questions:

1. What is the writer's main aim?
 - A. To discuss the world's deserts.
 - B. To discuss the Sahara desert.
 - C. To discuss the problems of growing deserts.
 - D. To discuss the number of people living in deserts.

2. What is the author's opinion about the human effect on deserts?
 - A. People are causing no damage.
 - B. People had an impact but now do not.
 - C. It is a cause of damage.
 - D. Climate change is the main cause of damage.

3. What does 'it' refer to in the following sentence?
... making it almost as large as Europe.
 - A. The Sahara.
 - B. North Africa.
 - C. Europe.
 - D. The report.

4. What does 'it' refer to in the following sentence?
It recommends offering support to people who live in desert areas.
 - A. The UN.
 - B. People living in the Sahara.
 - C. The government.
 - D. The UN report.

5. The Sahara is .
 - A. the world's largest desert
 - B. the world's second largest desert
 - C. the second largest in Africa
 - D. the desert with the least rainfall

6. The Sahara is .
 - A. growing
 - B. getting hotter
 - C. getting smaller
 - D. changing little

7. Too much water is being used to .
 - A. grow trees
 - B. develop new sources of income
 - C. drink
 - D. farm

8. The damage .
 - A. is not a big problem

- B. can't be stopped
 - C. can be stopped
 - D. is not a concern for the world
9. Mr Adeel believes .
- A. farming methods should not change
 - B. the way of working should not change
 - C. the climate should change
 - D. people should change their way of working
10. Which the best title for the text?
- A. The increase in desertification.
 - B. The overuse of land.
 - C. New ways of working.
 - D. The Sahara desert.

Writing:

An overseas friend wants to visit your country on holiday.

Write a letter to your friend. In your letter:

- Recommend the best time of year to visit and why
- Describe the types of accommodation your friend could choose
- Say what you would like to show your friend in your country

Variant 6

Reading Task:

The University of Oxford is located in the English city of Oxford. It is the world's third oldest surviving university and the oldest university in the English-speaking world. As the oldest university in the English-speaking world, Oxford is a unique and historic institution. There is no clear date of foundation, but teaching existed at Oxford in some form in 1096 and developed rapidly from 1167, when Henry II stopped English students from attending the University of Paris.

The University has 38 independent and self-governing colleges, and six permanent private halls. The collegiate system is at the heart of the University's success. The system gives students and academics the benefits of belonging to both a large, internationally renowned institution and to a small, interdisciplinary academic community. Colleges bring together leading academics and students across subjects and year groups, and from different cultures and countries.

There are over 20,000 students at Oxford, including 11,765 undergraduates and 8,701 postgraduates. Over a third of the total student body – more than 7,500 students – are citizens of foreign countries. 15% of these are undergraduates and 61% of these are graduate students. Students go to Oxford from 145 countries and territories.

Questions

1. Oxford is the oldest university in England.
 - A. True
 - B. False
 - C. Does not say

2. The university was opened by Henry II.
 - A. True
 - B. False
 - C. Does not say

3. The university became much bigger from 1167 onwards.
 - A. True
 - B. False
 - C. Does not say

4. France and England were at war in 1167.
A. True
B. False
C. Does not say
5. The university is one big institution with no separate colleges.
A. True
B. False
C. Does not say
6. The university has an excellent reputation around the world.
A. True
B. False
C. Does not say
7. Both undergraduates and postgraduates are international.
A. True
B. False
C. Does not say
8. Half of the students are international.
A. True
B. False
C. Does not say
9. More international students are undergraduate than postgraduate.
A. True
B. False
C. Does not say
10. Students belong to individual colleges.
A. True
B. False
C. Does not say

Writing:

You are attending a part time course in a college. Due to some problem, you cannot continue your course. Write a letter to your teacher

- Describe the course
- Explain the problem
- Explain the reason for not continuing
- Tell the teacher about your future plans

Variant 7

Reading Task:

Many people would like to learn how to play a musical instrument, but they are put off by one big problem: what to play? Here are a few questions to help you decide.

What kind of music do you like?

Many instruments are versatile, but some are more suited to certain types of music. Although there is some classical repertoire for the saxophone, for example, people associate it more with jazz, and it is not a permanent feature of many orchestras. Some instruments may lend themselves better than others to the music you like, so consider this before you start.

Do you want to play with other people?

Think about your long-term future as a musician. If you want to play with other people, what sort of instrument would be most practical? The initial attraction of playing a dazzling solo instrument like trumpet, violin, flute or lead guitar might fade when you realise how many other people are competing with you to get the main part with the same instrument! If you want to play rock music, there will always be a demand for bass players or drummers, and if you fancy being part of an orchestra, the bassoon is a great bet to make sure you are always needed.

Where are you going to practise?

Many people live in flats and practising the drums, for example, will drive your neighbours crazy. Think about where and when you are going to practise, as well as the patience of the people you live with or near. Electric versions of instruments like the piano, drums, guitar and even violin give you the option of playing into the night using headphones, while your housemates sleep in peace. Alternatively, you may need to consider going to a school or a community centre to practise.

How much money can you spend?

This is quite a big factor. A lot of instruments can be purchased in different price ranges, for example, guitars. But this doesn't alter the fact that many, such as the piano, are always pretty expensive. If you can't afford your chosen instrument, will you be able to borrow someone else's or hire one?

Are there any physical limitations?

If you're small and don't like lifting heavy objects, you won't want to carry around a double bass. Apart from that, use your common sense, and don't let your perceived physical shortcomings put you off. Who says small skinny people can't play the tuba? It's true that some wind instruments require a lot of lung power but with the right coaching, everyone can develop the right technique.

Still not sure?

Talk to people you know who already play instruments. They might even let you try theirs. It's also a good idea to find an experienced music teacher, preferably one who plays a few different instruments, who can give you some advice and push you in the right direction.

If you find an instrument you love and that suits your needs, you'll find the time spent choosing was well worth it. Good luck with making your choice!

Questions:

1. Many people think about learning a musical instrument but don't because ____.

- A) they haven't got enough time to practise
- B) they don't know which instrument to choose
- C) they can't afford to buy an instrument
- D) they think it will be too difficult

2. If you play the saxophone, ____.

- A) you can't play classical music
- B) there might be fewer opportunities to play classical music
- C) you can easily play in an orchestra
- D) you should only play jazz

3. Playing a popular solo instrument ____.

- A) is the best way to get into a band
- B) is only for people who are really confident
- C) means you will always perform on your own
- D) can be a drawback if you want to play with others

4. Electric instruments ____.

- A) are too noisy if you live close to other people
- B) can't be played at night
- C) are best for public performances
- D) are a good idea to avoid disturbing other people

5. Guitars ____.

- A) are normally relatively cheap
- B) are only for buyers with big budgets
- C) start quite cheap and go up to very expensive
- D) are worth paying more money for

6. Before choosing an instrument you should ____.

- A) consider the size and weight of the instrument
- B) avoid wind instruments if you are small and slim
- C) reflect on your physical limitations
- D) make sure you have the correct technique

7. An experienced music teacher can ____.

- A) tell you if you have the ability to learn a particular instrument
- B) lend you their instruments to try
- C) give you valuable guidance
- D) demonstrate the different instruments for you

8. The best summary of the author's attitude is ____.

- A) don't worry, just go for it!
- B) playing an instrument is not for everyone
- C) you can always change your mind
- D) considering your choice of instrument will pay off in the future

Writing:

Write a letter to your English speaking friend who is visiting you soon and asking you what presents your family would like. Write

- Who your family consists of
- What kind of presents each member would like.
- How you feel about your friend coming to visit

Variant 8:

Reading Task:

Leaving home

Going away to university is always a tricky time, both for the students who are leaving home and their parents who are staying behind. We got advice on how to cope from a student daughter and her dad.

A daughter's advice to parents, by Kerry Price

My parents drove me to uni at the beginning of the first term. That was great, but then they hung around, so it was hard to chat to the people in the rooms near mine. It's best if you leave us to unpack ourselves.

Don't ask us to come home during term time. There's a lot going on at weekends, there just isn't time.

Get another interest or a pet if you feel lonely without us. Don't make us feel guilty about leaving home!

It is quite interesting to hear about your experiences at uni, but remember that it was a LONG time ago so don't go on about it so much. Things have changed a lot. Now we have a lot more debt and it'll be harder to find a job in the future.

Please don't check up on us or our friends on Facebook. I know it's a public site, but we have the right to some privacy.

Don't change anything in our bedrooms. We have only half left home - we'll be back in the holidays, so please don't touch anything.

We'd still like to come on family holidays with you. Don't forget to include us just because we're not there all the time.

A father's advice to students, by Stuart Price

Don't complain so much about how much work you have to do. We work a lot too. You're an adult now, get used to it.

Put up with the fact that we refused to get a dog while you were at home, then suddenly bought one as soon as you moved out. We miss you!

Just because you're at university studying very complex subjects, it doesn't mean that you're more intelligent than everybody else. Don't treat your family as if they were stupid; we're really not.

Let us come and visit you now and again. We promise to try not to embarrass you in front of your friends. We just want to see you for a short time and take you out for a meal.

Don't waste so much time on Facebook. You need time for all that work you have to do, remember?

We might make a few changes to your room, so deal with it. It's great to have a guest room at last, but we won't change things too much, promise.

Don't forget to call home from time to time and don't get annoyed if we phone you. It's not pestering. If we didn't call, you wouldn't know that we care.

1. When children leave home to go to university, it's ____.
 A) the moment they've been waiting for
 B) a difficult experience
 C) more difficult for parents than for children
 D) more difficult for children than for parents
2. Kerry says when students first go to uni, parents should ____.
 A) give their children a lift and then stay a while
 B) give them a lift and then leave
 C) let their children find their own transport
 D) help them unpack their things
3. Kerry thinks students should ____.
 A) do everything they can to avoid upsetting lonely parents
 B) go home regularly while everyone gets used to the change
 C) not feel bad about spending weekends in their university town
 D) avoid visiting their parents too much during term time
4. Kerry thinks Facebook is ____.
 A) a good way to send private messages to family
 B) a good way to show her parents what she's doing with her friends
 C) a space that parents should keep away from
 D) great for parents as long as you're careful with your privacy settings
5. Stuart thinks students sometimes ____.
 A) look down on people who are not studying
 B) ask for help with their work too much
 C) talk about their university subjects too much
 D) forget that their parents were young once
6. Stuart says parents would like to ____.
 A) stay for at least one night when they visit
 B) meet their son or daughter's university friends
 C) come and visit at least once a fortnight
 D) visit every so often and go to a restaurant together
7. Stuart is ____.
 A) hurt that his daughter won't talk to him on Facebook
 B) critical of the amount of time his daughter spends on Facebook
 C) a big fan of Facebook
 D) confused about how to use Facebook properly
8. Stuart promises to ____.
 A) make only minimal changes to his daughter's bedroom
 B) keep his daughter's bedroom exactly as she left it
 C) redecorate his daughter's bedroom and turn it into a guest bedroom
 D) clean his daughter's old room before she comes back to visit

Writing:

There will be a traditional celebration in your country and you want to invite your friend from an English-speaking country. Write him/her a letter and

- invite your friend,
- explain what happens at the party,
- describe the tradition and why it's important in your country,
- say why it is important for your friend to be there.

Variant 9

Reading Task:

Study problems – help is here. Ask E-tutor.

Hi! I'm E-tutor, or Emma. I'm here to help with any study-related problems, whether big or small. Post a message on the forum below.

Meg:

What should I say to my sister?

Hi, E-tutor. Unfortunately, I share a bedroom and a desk with my elder sister. She continually distracts me because she's noisy and disorganised. I think she's disrespectful. I've got exams in a fortnight and I desperately need to revise. I can't concentrate when she's studying too and the desk is always overflowing with stuff so I can't find anything. If I try to have a dialogue with my sister, she gets annoyed. Can you help?

E-tutor:

Re: What should I say to my sister?

Hi, Meg. That's a common complaint between siblings. Why don't you discuss a rota system so that you use the desk at different times? Or maybe you could study at the local library, cultural centre or community centre a few days a week. Make sure you've got storage space for everything on your desk: folders and containers for your paper and stationery. If everything has its own place, it will be easier to keep orderly. It might even be enjoyable to do this together. If it's easier to write instead of talking face to face, try messaging her and explain how awful you feel.

Rudy:

Against the clock

My problem is time – or lack of it! Next month I've got 12 exams in three weeks. How can I possibly study for all of them? It's complicated. I think it's impossible.

E-tutor:

Re: Against the clock

Hi, Rudy. It isn't impossible but you DO have to get started NOW. Make a study plan and highlight periods of study time for each subject. Make a detailed plan for this week and then do the same for the weeks ahead. It's better to study for an hour or so a day than just once a week, all day. Your brain needs time to process information.

Hayley:

Disaster:

My problem is silly and a bit embarrassing. I just find it hard to study. I always stop and start and I keep getting the impression that I'm learning the wrong things. I'm a disaster. I don't think you can really help me.

E-tutor:

Re: Disaster

Hayley, your problem isn't silly at all! It's very real and lots of people experience the same thing as you. Sometimes things improve if they join a study group. Set up a group and meet a couple of days a week after school to study together. Take turns to give presentations and teach other what you know. It's called 'peer teaching' and is an effective and efficient practice for lots of students.

Questions:

1. Meg doesn't respect her sister.
A) True B) False
2. Meg finds it difficult to talk to her sister.
A) True B) False
3. E-tutor thinks Meg's problem is unusual.
A) True B) False
4. Rudy believes he has an impossible task.
A) True B) False
5. E-tutor thinks Rudy needs to start studying immediately.
A) True B) False
6. Rudy needs to study a little and often.
A) True B) False
7. Hayley is confident that her problem can be solved.
A) True B) False
8. E-tutor recommends that Hayley studies with a teacher.
A) True B) False

Writing:

You are not satisfied with the changing rooms in a sports centre that you visit. Write a letter to the manager.

- What the problem is
- How you feel about the problem

- What steps you want the manager to take

Variant 10.

Reading Task:

The end of life on Earth?

It weighed about 10,000 tons, entered the atmosphere at a speed of 64,000km/h and exploded over a city with a blast of 500 kilotons. But on 15 February 2013, we were lucky. The meteorite that showered pieces of rock over Chelyabinsk, Russia, was relatively small, at only about 17 metres wide. Although many people were injured by falling glass, the damage was nothing compared to what had happened in Siberia nearly one hundred years ago. Another relatively small object (approximately 50 metres in diameter) exploded in mid-air over a forest region, flattening about 80 million trees. If it had exploded over a city such as Moscow or London, millions of people would have been killed.

By a strange coincidence, the same day that the meteorite terrified the people of Chelyabinsk, another 50m-wide asteroid passed relatively close to Earth. Scientists were expecting that visit and know that the asteroid will return to fly close by us in 2046, but the Russian meteorite earlier in the day had been too small for anyone to spot.

Most scientists agree that comets and asteroids pose the biggest natural threat to human existence. It was probably a large asteroid or comet colliding with Earth which wiped out the dinosaurs about 65 million years ago. An enormous object, 10 to 16km in diameter, struck the Yucatan region of Mexico with the force of 100 megatons. That is the equivalent of one Hiroshima bomb for every person alive on Earth today.

Many scientists, including the late Stephen Hawking, say that any comet or asteroid greater than 20km in diameter that hits Earth will result in the complete destruction of complex life, including all animals and most plants. As we have seen, even a much smaller asteroid can cause great damage.

The Earth has been kept fairly safe for the last 65 million years by good fortune and the massive gravitational field of the planet Jupiter. Our cosmic guardian, with its stable circular orbit far from the sun, sweeps up and scatters away most of the dangerous comets and asteroids which might cross Earth's orbit. After the Chelyabinsk meteorite, scientists are now monitoring potential hazards even more carefully but, as far as they know, there is no danger in the foreseeable future.

Types of space rocks

Comet – a ball of rock and ice that sends out a tail of gas and dust behind it. Bright comets only appear in our visible night sky about once every ten years.

Asteroid – a rock a few feet to several kms in diameter. Unlike comets, asteroids have no tail. Most are too small to cause any damage and burn up in the atmosphere. They appear to us as 'shooting stars'.

Meteoroid – part of an asteroid or comet.

Meteorite – what a meteoroid is called when it hits Earth.

Questions:

1. The damage caused by the Russian meteorite ____.
A) could have been much worse
B) was huge
C) was greatly reduced by the early warning system
D) was much worse than the one in Siberia one hundred years ago
2. The Siberian meteorite ____.
A) hit a forest
B) hit a big city
C) caused glass to shower over people
D) damaged trees when it exploded
3. On the same day as the meteorite exploded over Chelyabinsk, ____.
A) there was another, related, asteroid event
B) there was another, unrelated, asteroid event
C) scientists realised that an even bigger asteroid could hit Earth
D) scientists issued a warning for 2046
4. The Russian meteorite ____.
A) had been predicted by scientists
B) came as a surprise

- C) was too small to worry about
 - D) will come close to Earth again in the future
5. Experts say that comets and asteroids could ____.
- A) wipe out all animal life, leaving only plants
 - B) kill a significant proportion of the Earth's human population
 - C) put an end to all plant and animal life on Earth
 - D) cause as much damage as the Hiroshima bomb
6. A small asteroid ____.
- A) can still cause a lot of damage
 - B) is not a problem if it is spotted early
 - C) cannot cause any significant harm
 - D) is actually more dangerous than a larger one
7. Earth has been relatively safe thanks to ____.
- A) pure luck
 - B) luck and the protective force of another planet from our solar system
 - C) early warning systems set up by NASA
 - D) luck and our position in relation to the sun
8. Scientists say ____.
- A) it is impossible to monitor all the potential hazards
 - B) we are not in any danger for the moment
 - C) a meteorite is likely to hit Earth sooner or later
 - D) their early warning systems will protect us

Writing:

You have heard that your company is organising a language training abroad for a limited number of participants. Write a letter of interest:

- state your position in your company
- explain why they should include you in the training
- explain how your training could benefit you and your company

Variant 11

Reading Task:

The history of graffiti

The first drawings on walls appeared in caves thousands of years ago. Later the Ancient Romans and Greeks wrote their names and protest poems on buildings. Modern graffiti seems to have appeared in Philadelphia in the early 1960s, and by the late sixties it had reached New York. The new art form really took off in the 1970s, when people began writing their names, or 'tags', on buildings all over the city. In the mid seventies it was sometimes hard to see out of a subway car window, because the trains were completely covered in spray paintings known as 'masterpieces'.

In the early days, the 'taggers' were part of street gangs who were concerned with marking their territory. They worked in groups called 'crews', and called what they did 'writing' – the term 'graffiti' was first used by The New York Times and the novelist Norman Mailer. Art galleries in New York began buying graffiti in the early seventies. But at the same time that it began to be regarded as an art form, John Lindsay, the then mayor of New York, declared the first war on graffiti. By the 1980s it became much harder to write on subway trains without being caught, and instead many of the more established graffiti artists began using roofs of buildings or canvases.

The debate over whether graffiti is art or vandalism is still going on. Peter Vallone, a New York city councillor, thinks that graffiti done with permission can be art, but if it is on someone else's property it becomes a crime. 'I have a message for the graffiti vandals out there,' he said recently. 'Your freedom of expression ends where my property begins.' On the other hand, Felix, a member of the Berlin-based group Reclaim Your City, says that artists are reclaiming cities for the public from advertisers, and that graffiti represents freedom and makes cities more vibrant.

For decades graffiti has been a springboard to international fame for a few. Jean-Michel Basquiat began spraying on the street in the 1970s before becoming a respected artist in the '80s. The Frenchman Blek le Rat and the British artist Banksy have achieved international fame by producing complex works with stencils, often

making political or humorous points. Works by Banksy have been sold for over £100,000. Graffiti is now sometimes big business.

1. Why was the seventies an important decade in the history of graffiti?
 - A) That was when modern graffiti first appeared.
 - B) That was when modern graffiti first became really popular.
 - C) That was when graffiti first reached New York.
2. What is a 'masterpiece' in graffiti?
 - A) A really high-quality piece of graffiti.
 - B) A work of graffiti showing the artist's name.
 - C) A full piece of graffiti, like those seen on subway trains.
3. What was the main motivation for the first taggers?
 - A) Showing which streets belonged to which gangs.
 - B) Creating a strong visual identity for their 'crew'.
 - C) Sending coded messages to other gangs.
4. Who coined the phrase 'graffiti'?
 - A) New York gangs who had a lot of Italian immigrant members.
 - B) A newspaper and an author.
 - C) The man who was the mayor of New York in the late seventies.
5. How did things change after the first war on graffiti?
 - A) It was considered a more serious crime.
 - B) Graffiti artists had to find different places to paint.
 - C) New York looked a lot cleaner.
6. What does New York city councillor Peter Vallone say about graffiti?
 - A) Graffiti can be good for cities as long as it is tasteful and conveys positive messages.
 - B) Graffiti can be beautiful if it is done by a skilled artist.
 - C) Graffiti is a crime if the artist does not have permission.
7. What do the Berlin-based group Reclaim Your City say about graffiti?
 - A) Involving young people in graffiti stops them getting involved with serious crime.
 - B) Graffiti helps the public to own the streets and take control away from advertisers.
 - C) Graffiti actually increases the value of property by making the area more attractive.
8. What is the author's final point?
 - A) Graffiti has now become mainstream and can make artists a lot of money.
 - B) Graffiti is not a good way to become a respected artist.
 - C) Some of the most popular graffiti artists end up being exploited by the art world.

Writing:

You are a football player, but you have to leave the team for a while, write a letter to your team-mate and say:

- why you have to leave,
- how much you love the football team,
- when you are coming back.

Variant 12

Reading Task:

Video games are good for you!

For years video games have been criticised for making people more antisocial, overweight or depressed. But now researchers are finding that games can actually change us for the better and improve both our body and mind.

Games can help to develop physical skills. Pre-school children who played interactive games such as the ones available on Wii have been shown to have improved motor skills, for example they can kick, catch and throw a ball better than children who don't play video games. A study of surgeons who do microsurgery in Boston found that those who played video games were 27 per cent faster and made 37 per cent fewer errors than those who didn't. Vision is also improved, particularly telling the difference between shades of grey. This is useful for driving at night, piloting a plane or reading X-rays.

Games also benefit a variety of brain functions, including decision-making. People who play action-based games make decisions 25 per cent faster than others and are no less accurate, according to one study. It was also found that the best gamers can make choices and act on them up to six times a second, four times faster than most people. In another study by researchers from the University of Rochester in New York, experienced gamers were shown to be able to pay attention to more than six things at once without getting confused, compared with the four that most people can normally keep in mind. Additionally, video games can also reduce gender differences. Scientists have found that women who play games are better able to mentally manipulate 3D objects.

There is also evidence that gaming can help with psychological problems. At the University of Auckland in New Zealand, researchers asked 94 young people diagnosed with depression to play a 3D fantasy game called SPARX and in many cases, the game reduced symptoms of depression more than conventional treatment. Another research team at Oxford University found that playing Tetris shortly after exposure to something very upsetting – in the experiment, a film of traumatic scenes of injury and death was used – can actually prevent people having disturbing flashbacks.

The effects are not always so positive, however. Indiana University researchers carried out brain scans on young men and found evidence that violent games can alter brain function after as little as a week of play, affecting regions in the brain associated with emotional control and causing more aggressive behaviour in the player. But Daphne Bavelier, one of the most experienced researchers in the field, says that the violent action games that often worry parents most may actually have the strongest beneficial effect on the brain. In the future, we may see many treatments for physical and neurological problems which incorporate the playing of video games.

Questions:

1. Only relatively recently have people started to realise ____.
 - A) the harmful effects of video games
 - B) the beneficial effects of video games
 - C) how much we don't know about video games' effects
 - D) how much video games affect the people that play them
2. Very young children show improved ____ after playing video games.
 - A) muscle control and co-ordination
 - B) social interaction
 - C) decision-making
 - D) ability to differentiate between different colours
3. Playing video games helps doctors ____.
 - A) do operations and read X-rays
 - B) make decisions under pressure
 - C) operate complex equipment
 - D) tend to more than one patient at a time
4. Video gamers' decision-making speed is significantly improved by ____.
 - A) years of gaming experience
 - B) long periods of game playing
 - C) playing video games in short bursts
 - D) certain types of video game
5. Women who play video games demonstrate ____.
 - A) faster reaction speeds
 - B) reduced stress levels
 - C) better spatial awareness
 - D) better multitasking ability
6. In one research study, the video game Tetris helped people to ____.
 - A) improve their concentration
 - B) overcome depression
 - C) forget disturbing experiences
 - D) make decisions faster
7. Research shows that violent video games ____.
 - A) have no negative effects on players

- B) only affect players' brains after extended hours of play
 - C) may have positive and negative effects on the brain
 - D) only affect players' brains in beneficial ways
8. In the future, computer games may be used for ____.
- A) treating a variety of medical problems
 - B) training doctors to deal with emotional pressure
 - C) helping parents to deal with difficult teenagers
 - D) treating prisoners with a history of violent behaviour

Writing:

Write a letter to local council regarding the plan of replacement of a library with a supermarket, you need to write the following:

- where do you get this information,
- the disadvantages of having a supermarket instead of the library, -
- importance of the library

Variant 13

Reading Task:

How LED lights can save sea turtles' lives

Sea turtles are amazing animals that have lived in our oceans for millions of years. However, today, they face many dangers. One of these comes from non-natural light. When baby sea turtles, also called hatchlings, come out of their eggs, they need to find the ocean quickly. They usually do this by following the natural light of the Moon and stars reflecting off the water. But in many places, artificial lights – from streets, buildings, and homes – are much brighter than the Moon. These lights can confuse baby sea turtles and make it hard for them to find their way to the ocean. This causes them to lose their way and head toward the land instead of the sea.

When this happens, the baby turtles can get lost, dehydrated, or even be eaten by other animals.

Although artificial light is usually a problem for sea turtles, we don't have to live in the dark to protect them. Research shows that using special artificial lights, placed low to the ground and slightly covered so they can't be seen from the beach, reduces the chances of sea turtles getting confused. These turtle-friendly lights are also better for people as they can improve visibility while driving by reducing the shine on the car windows. If you live near the coast or are visiting a beach where sea turtles live, you can help. Use lights that are not bright and low to the ground. Close curtains at night to reduce the amount of light coming from inside buildings.

Sea turtles have another enemy. Every year, hundreds of thousands of these sea animals are caught by large fishing boats in their fishing nets by accident – this means six to eight turtles daily for each boat in Mexico alone. Surprisingly, in this case, artificial lights can be helpful for sea turtles.

Studies show that turtles use their sight to find food, but when swimming underwater at night, it's hard to see the fishing net. So, different organisations have developed fishing nets with LED lights. By adding lights to fishing nets, scientists have found a way to prevent turtles and other animals from getting caught in the nets, reducing the number of unwanted catches by 60% to 95% without lowering the amount of fish caught.

Using LED lights on fishing nets doesn't just help sea turtles. When sea animals get stuck in the net by mistake, they might damage it. It costs time and money to remove sea turtles from their nets and to fix or replace the broken nets. In addition, LED lights are energy-efficient and last a long time. This new design of fishing nets reduces costs, making it a less expensive option.

Questions:

1. What light should the turtles follow to find the sea?
 - a.the reflection of skylights off the sea
 - b.the direct light of the Moon
 - c.lights that humans use to help them
2. What happens if the turtles follow artificial light?
 - a.They find dangerous animals.
 - b.They don't swim in the right direction.
 - c.They walk in the wrong direction.
3. What is another advantage of using turtle-friendly lights?
 - a.They reduce energy consumption in houses and streets.
 - b.They can help people who are visiting the beach at night.

- c. Drivers can see better while travelling on the road.
4. What is another problem for sea turtles?
- They get stuck in nets while trying to catch fish.
 - They can't see fishing nets in the dark.
 - Fishing boats are reducing their food supply.
5. What is the purpose of fishing nets with LED lights?
- To keep turtles away from the nets.
 - To help sea turtles find their food.
 - To attract more fish to the nets.
6. What does the writer say about the LED lights on the fishing nets?
- They are damaged easily.
 - They are cheap to use.
 - They are quick to repair.
7. What causes baby turtles lose their way?
- The Moon
 - The artificial light
 - The Ocean
 - The fishing net
8. LED lights are ...
- expensive
 - energy-efficient
 - cheap
 - modern

Writing:

Write a letter to your neighbour who is having animals in his/her garden. You and your family members are having problems with the animals

- introduce yourself
- tell the problem
- suggest solutions

Variant 14

Reading Task:

A Town that Lives in One Building

Located in the beautiful state of Alaska, a little town called Whittier is tucked away in a picturesque area surrounded by mountains and the ocean. This hidden gem is hard to reach: the only ways to and from Whittier are either by ferry or through a one-lane tunnel that cuts through the mountains. This tunnel is unique because it is shared by both vehicles and trains, necessitating a precisely managed schedule to accommodate both modes of transportation and both directions of traffic.

Whittier's economy thrives on its port, the town's main source of employment, where cargo ships drop off their containers for rail transportation across Alaska. The town also has a grocery store, a museum, two hotels, and various other job opportunities for all its citizens: police officers, municipal workers, educators at the local school, and marina staff. Tourism has grown over the last few years to become an alternative source of income, drawing visitors to attractions such as the Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel, glacier jet ski tours, and scenic boat excursions that offer breathtaking views of marine wildlife and icebergs.

But the most fascinating aspect of Whittier is perhaps the fact that nearly all of its 200-odd residents live under the same roof. The Begich Towers, a 14-story building, is more than just an apartment complex; it's a self-contained town! The harsh winter weather helps to explain the convenience of this unusual way of living.

Whittier's winter months are known for their heavy snowfalls and fierce winds. By having all the necessary facilities and services in one building, the residents don't have to brave the cold weather every time they need to run an errand or go to church. Not even the children need to step outside to attend school, which is in an adjacent building connected through a tunnel. It's an ingenious solution that makes life in such an extreme climate much more manageable.

However, the origins of Whittier's unique living situation date back to the early last century when the area was chosen for a military base. Shielded by towering mountains and situated by a bay with unfreezing waters, this

location offered an ideal strategic position. Initially, wooden camps housed the soldiers, but as the need for more permanent structures grew with the increasing population, two significant buildings were erected: the once largest building in Alaska, the Buckner Building, and the Begich Towers. The construction of the tunnel in the 1940s, intended to provide railway access, marked Whittier's transformation into an essential cargo and passenger port. After the military left in the 1960s, the Buckner Building was abandoned, and the Begich Towers became the main residential and communal space for the town's inhabitants.

Nowadays, Whittier's residents just need to hop on the elevator to go grocery shopping, visit the police station, or eat 'out'—though in this case, 'eat in' might be more accurate. There's even a health clinic, which is far from being a hospital but more than enough for minor ailments. In essence, everything the residents may need is a few steps away from their homes. Living in Begich Towers offers a sense of community and convenience that is hard to find elsewhere. The close proximity of homes and businesses fosters a strong bond among the residents. Whether they're sharing a cup of coffee at the café on the ground floor or attending a community meeting, the people of Whittier have created a unique and supportive environment.

Whittier might be small, but it's a remarkable example of adaptability and community spirit. Its single-building town, surrounded by Alaska's breathtaking landscape, is a testament to human ingenuity and resilience.

1. Which adjective would better describe Whittier?

- a.remote
- b.reachable
- c.mountainous

2. If you are going to Whittier through the tunnel...

- a.your only option is to take a train.
- b.you can't use the tunnel while other people are leaving.
- c.you can go by car at any time.

3. Most people in Whittier work in...

- a.the shipping industry.
- b.tourism.
- c.services.

4. According to the text,...

- a.having a town in one building is not ideal.
- b.the school is in the same building.
- c.the town's church is in the Begich Towers.

5. The towers were built...

- a.to protect the soldiers from the weather.
- b.to accommodate an expanding population.
- c.to mark Whittier's transformation.

6.Which of these can you NOT find in Begich Towers?

- a.a restaurant
- b.a hospital
- c.a supermarket

Writing:

You have finished a course. Write a letter to the course organizer to give your feedback. In your letter include:

You have finished a course.

- the details of the course,
- what you enjoyed during the course,
- any suggestions you would have.