FINAL READING TEST

Done by_____ TOTAL_____ (10 points)

11 Read the text. For questions 1–5, choose the correct answer, A, B, C or D. (5 points)

The power of personality

'He has a great personality!' That's how Bill, who later became my husband, was first described to me by my best friend. What she was trying to tell me in those five innocent words was that the man I was about to meet was less than attractive. And it's true, you wouldn't notice him in a crowd. But he really does have a great personality. From the first time we talked I was attracted to him, and after a few short weeks we fell madly in love.

Our idyllic life together was shattered a few years later when I almost lost Bill. In some sense I did lose him. Bill was driving home from work when he lost control of his car and crashed, leading to months in hospital. When he finally regained consciousness, the good-natured, affectionate Bill I used to know had been replaced by a much more self-critical and insecure version.

As a psychology student I'd studied theories on what makes us who we are, whether we are a product of nature or nurture and how far we can choose our identity. I'd even read up on a few cases where people had suffered catastrophic events and seemingly woken up with whole new personalities. It was only when I witnessed it first-hand that I became fascinated.

The tendency to classify people into personality types goes way back, even as far as the Ancient Greeks. They believed people could be categorised into four main humours, not dissimilar to the more modern Myers-Briggs test which is based on a wider range of sixteen personality types. Another field of thought, professed by Walter Mischel, was that behaviour was much more dependent on the situation a person found themselves in, rather than something present from birth.

It's now generally accepted that there are five main personality types. These are conscientiousness, which is connected to your goals and how sensitive you are towards them. Agreeableness, whether a person is insecure and seeks approval from others or trusts in their own abilities. Extraversion, whether or not you enjoy socialising. Neuroticism, how you respond to threats, and finally openness, whether you are daring when it comes to new experiences or prefer to keep things the way they are.

Of these five traits, the one that seems easiest to change is neuroticism. Research shows that over time, everyone's personality changes. It just happens so gradually that we don't notice. Since neuroticism is linked to poor health and a reduced lifespan, it's the one that people are most likely to seek help for, usually through therapy. When the right help is given, rather than a gradual change, such as the growth of a plant or the erosion of a cliff, the changes in terms of neuroticism are far easier to identify. Instead of thirty or forty years it can take as little as a month.

With that in mind, Bill and I have been on a mission to help him regain some of the identity he had before his accident. Scientific papers state that one way to change the mechanisms of behaviour is to focus on strengths and resources rather than problems, and finding ways these strengths can help you. Since Bill has always been very

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athletic, we found ways for him to channel his anger through learning martial arts, which he has gone on to compete in successfully. We still have a long way to go, but there are more and more glimpses of the old Bill showing through, and I have no doubt that this will continue as we keep working together.

1 The writer's friend focussed on Bill's personality because

A she didn't know what he looked like.

B she believed it was his most attractive quality.

C he had a similar personality to the writer.

D it was the easiest way to identify him in a crowd.

2 The writer became really interested in theories about personality when

A she was studying psychology.

B she read cases about people whose personalities had changed.

C she noticed changes in Bill.

D she started working as a psychologist.

3 Walter Mischel suggested that

A behaviour is fixed from birth.

B there are sixteen different personality types.

C people have the power to change their situations.

D the way people behave is deeply affected by the circumstances around them.

4 Research shows that

A it's impossible to notice changes in your own personality.

B it takes up to forty years for personality to change.

C neuroticism is the trait that people most commonly want to work on.

D poor health is linked to having therapy for personality disorders.

5 Bill is now

A slowly returning to his only self.

B as confident as he was before the accident.

C focussing on his problems.

D returning to his hobby of martial arts.

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II. Read the text. Complete the gaps 1-5 with sentences A-F. There is one extra sentence. (5 points)

Keeping the customers happy

In today's crowded market place it's essential to stand out if you want to be successful. Whether you're selling food, jewellery or furniture, businesses both big and small need to ensure that they are providing the customer with the high quality items and bargain prices that they have come to expect. **(1)** _____ Here, we discuss three jobs that are essential in keeping companies on track and in touch with what people really want.

Mystery shopper

Maria took a casual job as a mystery shopper when she was still at university having found herself to be a bit short of money. **(2)** _____ She now works as a team leader, managing a group of mystery shoppers whose role is to assess the entire shopping experience. This includes the items, products or services on offer, the customer service and the ethical values of the companies. The shoppers are contracted by the stores who expect detailed reports on how they are perceived by the general public with a view to improving the way they operate.

With the way we shop changing, the experience may be in store or online. It's the shopper's job to visit the store, purchase products and seek information from staff. That might be to assess whether they hold responsible attitudes to the environment and worker's rights, and how much they know about the items they are selling.

Restaurant critic

Restaurant, or food critics typically work for magazines or newspapers and it's their job to review restaurants, cafes and bars which serve food. Like mystery shoppers, critics evaluate the whole experience of eating out but it differs in one major way. **(3)** _____This is because they are not employed by the establishments they review. Christine had always dreamed of being a chef, and as a teenager would spend her weekends coming up with new recipes. Having gained solid experience working in a high-end restaurant, she started looking out for new opportunities and stumbled upon an advert for a critic. She got the job and it has taken her to interesting places all over the world, not only popular expensive restaurants but much smaller, more humble places too. She prefers visiting family-run businesses in picturesque villages rather than urban establishments in the city which she often finds too minimalist. Perhaps that's because she misses home when she is travelling, so looks for comfort rather than modern styles. But she does have some advice for surviving in the role. **(4)** _____ She also says it's important to believe in yourself and not let negative comments or behaviours upset you. She's received unpleasant letters and one restaurant owner even threatened her.

Food scientist

A food scientist, also known as a food alchemist or flavourologist has the enviable job of tasting food for a living. Despite many people considering this an ideal job, it's not as easy as it seems. It involves more than sitting at a table being served food. **(5)** _____ This means she assists in creating flavours and advises on the texture, appearance and smell of the product. Just like with any job, it can be repetitive and tiring and there are

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many days when she finds it a real chore. And she is perhaps one of the lucky ones. Somewhere there are people testing foods such as fish oil or mayonnaise.

A They are not obliged to give any direct feedback, and are free to publish their thoughts and observations in the media.

B Paula works as an ice cream taster and as well as spending up to four hours every day assessing the quality of each batch of produce, she also works in the lab.

C And with new businesses springing up all the time, it's never been more important to shine.

D Without this essential information, it's all down to guesswork how to keep the consumers happy.

E She maintains it's essential that you enjoy your own company in this job as it involves a lot of time on the road and in hotels.

F She's gone on to make a career out of it and next year will be celebrating her twentieth year in the job.

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