

INTERMEDIATE READING EXAM – DECEMBER 2022

It really annoys me when people **claim** smartphones are a bad thing. Can't they remember what life was like without them? Did we live in a 'golden age' where families had polite conversations and played prettily in green fields? No! We did the exact same things as we do now. I loved an old board game called *Hero Quest*, now I love *World of Warcraft* — it's the same fun! We talked to our friends on **landlines** for hours and filled our heads with information from magazines, TV and newspapers. The behaviour is the same, but today we do it with fewer devices and much, *much* less paper. And don't get me started on photos. Not so very long ago, people had to take photos using analogue cameras. You couldn't even see the pictures for days because you had to pay someone to develop them for you. And then we **stored** them in photo albums that were so big most people couldn't **lift** them.

So, I am a fan of the smartphone. But the biggest fans of all are the people of India. The Indian smartphone market grew by 18% in 2016 — that's a faster increase than anywhere else in the world. Internet access using mobile phones is 80% in India, again the world's highest, with Indonesia in second place at 73%. Compare that to the UK where more than half of internet connection is via desktop computers.

Interestingly, many people in India choose to buy simpler 4G phones instead of smartphones. In part, that's because of poor **reception** in rural areas. But this has led to a very competitive market, with Indian companies going **head to head** with larger Chinese phone producers. Data charges actually went down by 20% last year! Phone companies are opening new **stores** all over India, because (unlike Chinese shoppers), most Indians choose to buy their phones using cash in stores rather than online.

So smartphones can keep us connected, but could they also keep us healthy? A recent report found that mHealth could save \$1billion dollars each year in India alone. The idea of 'mHealth' is simple — it means the use of mobile phone **initiatives** in healthcare. And it's easy to see the possibilities. An app could tell people in cities if the pollution in the air is good or bad. Patients who live outside towns and cities won't have to travel miles to find expert medical advice. Instead, doctors will be able to see many more patients by using mobile health data and video chats. People already carry their music, photos and bank details on their phone. It **makes sense** that all our health data should be there too.

So the next time someone tells you mobiles are dangerous, or rude, or turning young people into zombies, tell them they should **think again**.

A) Choose A, B, or C. Mark the correct option with an 'X'.

Example: The author finds some people's attitude to smartphones annoying.

A True B False C Doesn't say

1. The author thinks smartphones have changed people's behaviour.
A True B False C Doesn't say
2. The author didn't use to spend much time talking on the phone to friends.
A True B False C Doesn't say
3. The author can't remember the last time he or she read a newspaper.
A True B False C Doesn't say
4. In India, internet access using desktop computers is lower than in the UK.
A True B False C Doesn't say

5. India and Indonesia have similar levels of mobile phone use.
A True B False C Doesn't say
6. Simpler phones are popular in India because of cheap data charges.
A True B False C Doesn't say
7. It's expensive for countries to set up *mHealth* initiatives.
A True B False C Doesn't say
8. The ideas behind *mHealth* are easy to understand, even if you're not a doctor.
A True B False C Doesn't say
9. One benefit is that *mHealth* could increase the number of patients each doctor sees.
A True B False C Doesn't say

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B) Match the following definitions with five of the words/expressions highlighted in the text.

- 1) reconsider your opinion:
- 2) kept:
- 3) be logical:
- 4) in direct competition:
- 5) pick up:

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