

Vocabulary

1. herald
 2. pessimism
 3. upturn
 4. tumultuous
 5. peril
 6. rage
 7. extinct
 8. realms
 9. far-out
 10. immortality
 11. prospect
 12. bionic
 13. the masses
 14. compare notes
- a. Stormy, volatile and full of ups and downs.
 - b. Of a species of animal or plant having no living members.
 - c. Be a sign that something is about to happen.
 - d. An improvement in economic conditions or in someone's fortunes.
 - e. A tendency to see the worst aspect of things or believe that the worst will happen.
 - f. Serious and immediate danger.
 - g. Continue with great force or intensity.
 - h. Unconventional; unusual; out of the ordinary.
 - i. The ability to live forever; eternal life.
 - j. The ordinary people.
 - k. A field or area of activity or interest.
 - l. Share experiences or opinions with someone about something.
 - m. Having artificial body parts, especially electromechanical ones.
 - n. The possibility or likelihood of some future event occurring.

Complete the description

As the clock struck twelve midnight to (1) _____ the arrival of the 2020s, people the world over were filled with a (2) _____ of optimism and pessimism at what the new decade might have in (3) _____ for us. Many hope the New Year will see an upturn in their fortunes and those of planet Earth. The past decade could be described as having been somewhat (4) _____. Global warming stoked fears of our very existence being in (5) _____; wars and conflict have continued to (6) _____ around the world; millions still (7) _____ basic things like clean water and education; and thousands of species became endangered or (8) _____. There is hope that technology and greater cooperation between nations will make the 2020s a better decade.

The technology website cnet.com (9) _____ that many of us will advance further into the (10) _____ of science fiction. It wrote: "The decade beginning in 2020 will take us even further toward a world where far-out ideas like (11) _____ brains up to computers, and even (12) _____, become topics of serious conversation." Futurologist Vivek Wadhwa wrote about the (13) _____ of flying cars, bionic exoskeleton suits and (14) _____ clean energy. He told cnet.com that: "Some technologies will take longer to reach the (15) _____ than others, but they will be at hand. The 2020s will be when the incredible promises of technology finally happen." Let's get together again in 2030 and compare (16) _____ on how things went.

Listen and check if the ideas are true or false

1. What is the author's purpose in mentioning both optimism and pessimism about the new decade in the first paragraph?

- a) To suggest that the future is unpredictable
- b) To emphasize that people are always optimistic about new years
- c) To explain why 2020 was a year of technological advancement
- d) To claim that pessimism is more prevalent than optimism

2. What does the phrase "our very existence being in peril" most likely mean in the context of the article?

- a) Humans are facing extinction due to species loss
- b) Wars are the biggest threat to our survival
- c) The environmental crisis is endangering humanity
- d) People are becoming disconnected from technology

3. The article states, "The past decade could be described as having been somewhat tumultuous." Which of the following best simplifies the meaning of this sentence?

- a) The past decade was quiet and peaceful.
- b) The past decade was full of significant challenges and unrest.
- c) The past decade was technologically advanced but uneventful.
- d) The past decade was focused on environmental conservation.

4. What does the author mean by "hooking brains up to computers"?

- a) Teaching people how to use computers
- b) Using computers to store information about the brain
- c) Connecting human minds directly to computers for advanced functions
- d) Creating robots that can mimic human behavior

5. What is the rhetorical purpose of the final sentence: "Let's get together again in 2030 and compare notes on how things went"?

- a) To conclude the article in a humorous and optimistic way
- b) To imply that technology will likely fail to deliver its promises
- c) To suggest that the reader should keep up with technological trends
- d) To encourage future predictions about global cooperation

6. According to Vivek Wadhwa, which of the following technologies might become widespread in the 2020s?

- a) Space travel and colonizing other planets
- b) Flying cars, clean energy, and bionic suits
- c) Virtual reality in every home
- d) Advanced water purification systems