

## ■ VSTEP Reading Practice Set

### (Education – Environment – Technology)

#### □ Reading 1 – *The Value of Reading Books*

In today's digital world, people have more ways than ever to get information. However, reading books is still one of the most powerful ways to learn, relax, and imagine. Books allow readers to travel to other places, experience new ideas, and understand different people — all without leaving home. While the Internet offers quick facts, books help readers think deeply and focus for longer periods. Reading also improves language skills, memory, and creativity, which are important in both education and daily life.

Books can also improve emotional health. Reading about other people's stories helps us feel empathy and understand emotions better. For many, reading provides comfort after a stressful day. Psychologists have shown that regular readers are often more patient, calm, and open-minded. Unlike watching television, which is a passive activity, reading requires active thinking. The reader must imagine pictures, understand meanings, and decide what the author wants to say.

However, reading habits are changing quickly. Many young people spend much of their time on social media instead of reading books. Long hours on screens can make it harder to concentrate and can reduce interest in longer texts. Fortunately, e-books and audiobooks are helping to keep reading popular in modern life. Some people listen to books while driving or walking. What truly matters is not the format, but the act of reading itself. Whether on paper or on a phone, reading helps people learn more about the world and about themselves.

### Questions

#### 1. (Main Idea)

**What is the main idea of the passage?**

- A. Reading books remains valuable for both the mind and emotions.
- B. Television is better for learning than reading.
- C. People no longer need to read because of the Internet.
- D. Reading is only useful for students.

#### 2. (Detail)

**According to the passage, what are some benefits of reading?**

- A. Gaining knowledge, improving empathy, and developing patience
- B. Traveling faster and meeting more people
- C. Using the Internet more easily
- D. Becoming more active in sports

#### 3. (Vocabulary in context)

**The word "empathy" in paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to:**

- A. curiosity

- B. understanding others' feelings
- C. happiness
- D. imagination

**4. (Reference)**

The word "it" in paragraph 2 ("It can reduce stress...") refers to:

- A. reading
- B. stress
- C. empathy
- D. television

**5. (Inference)**

What can be inferred about reading compared to television?

- A. Reading makes people think more actively.
- B. Television gives people more imagination.
- C. Reading is faster and easier than watching TV.
- D. Television improves focus.

**6. (Detail)**

What problem is mentioned about modern reading habits?

- A. People spend more time online than reading.
- B. Books have become too expensive.
- C. Teachers no longer teach reading skills.
- D. Libraries are closing everywhere.

**7. (Vocabulary – synonym)**

In paragraph 3, the word "popular" is closest in meaning to:

- A. dangerous
- B. well-known or liked
- C. private
- D. expensive

**8. (Highlight – phrase meaning)**

The phrase "the act of reading itself" refers to:

- A. only reading printed books
- B. the process or habit of reading
- C. buying many books
- D. reading for work only

**9. (Sentence insertion)**

Where does this sentence best fit?

**"Teachers and parents also play an important role in building children's reading habits."**

- A. After sentence 2 of paragraph 1
- B. Before the last sentence of paragraph 2

- C. After sentence 2 of paragraph 3
  - D. At the end of the passage
- 

## Reading 2 – Protecting the Oceans

The oceans cover more than 70% of our planet and are home to millions of species. They provide oxygen, food, and jobs for billions of people. However, human activity has severely damaged marine ecosystems. Plastic pollution, overfishing, and climate change are some of the biggest threats. Scientists warn that if action is not taken soon, the oceans will lose their ability to support life.

Plastic waste is one of the most visible problems. Every year, millions of tons of plastic end up in the sea, harming fish and seabirds. Some animals mistake plastic for food, while others get trapped in it. Although recycling can help, experts believe the real solution is reducing plastic use and improving waste management.

Protecting the oceans requires global cooperation. Governments must create stricter laws, companies must use environmentally friendly materials, and individuals must change their daily habits. Using reusable bottles, avoiding single-use plastics, and supporting ocean-cleaning projects can make a real difference. The health of the oceans depends on everyone — from large organizations to ordinary people.

### Questions

#### 1. What is the main idea of the passage?

- A. Oceans are in danger due to human activity.
- B. Plastic pollution is easy to clean up.
- C. Governments alone can save the oceans.
- D. Recycling is the only solution.

#### 2. The word “species” in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to:

- A. oceans
- B. types of living things
- C. climate zones
- D. fishing areas

#### 3. According to the passage, which is NOT mentioned as a threat?

- A. Overfishing
- B. Deforestation
- C. Plastic pollution
- D. Climate change

4. The word “it” in paragraph 2 refers to:

- A. plastic
- B. fish
- C. the ocean
- D. food

5. The phrase “make a real difference” means:

- A. change nothing
- B. have a positive effect
- C. cause a problem
- D. reduce cooperation

6. TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

- a) Plastic harms marine animals.
- b) Only recycling can solve the problem.
- c) Individuals can help protect oceans.

7. In paragraph 3, the word “cooperation” is closest in meaning to:

- A. teamwork
- B. competition
- C. argument
- D. confusion

8. What can we infer from the passage?

- A. Everyone shares responsibility for protecting the oceans.
- B. Pollution is a problem only in poor countries.
- C. Oceans will recover naturally without help.
- D. Recycling is unnecessary.

9. Sentence insertion:

“Children can also learn about ocean protection through school projects.”

- A. After sentence 2 of paragraph 1
- B. Before the last sentence of paragraph 2
- C. After sentence 1 of paragraph 3
- D. At the end of paragraph 3

10. The author’s purpose is to:

- A. Inform readers about ocean problems and solutions.
- B. Entertain readers with stories about marine life.
- C. Describe government policies.
- D. Argue against recycling.

Technology has changed the way people communicate. In the past, letters took days or weeks to arrive, but now messages can be sent instantly through email or social media. This speed has made the world more connected than ever before. However, it has also created new challenges. Many people spend so much time online that they forget how to communicate face to face.

The rise of smartphones has made communication easier but also more distracting. Notifications and constant updates make it difficult for people to focus. Studies show that students who use their phones too often find it harder to concentrate on studies. Experts recommend setting time limits for phone use and spending at least an hour each day offline.

Despite these problems, technology also has many positive effects. It allows families to stay in touch across countries and helps businesses communicate quickly. The key is balance — using technology to connect, not to replace human relationships. True communication means listening, understanding, and being present — things no device can fully replace.

## Questions

1. What is the main idea of the passage?

- A. Technology improves and challenges human communication.
- B. Phones are the main cause of all problems.
- C. Letters are better than emails.
- D. People should stop using the internet.

2. The word “**instantly**” in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to:

- A. slowly
- B. immediately
- C. safely
- D. rarely

3. According to the passage, what problem is caused by smartphone use?

- A. Difficulty focusing
- B. Faster thinking
- C. Stronger memory
- D. Longer conversations

4. The word “**it**” in paragraph 3 refers to:

- A. balance
- B. technology
- C. business
- D. communication

5. The phrase “**be present**” means:

- A. give gifts
- B. exist in the moment

- C. avoid communication
- D. speak loudly

6. Which of the following is TRUE according to the passage?

- A. Technology should replace human contact.
- B. Phones help, but people must use them wisely.
- C. The internet stops all relationships.
- D. Balance is impossible in communication.

7. Highlight question:

In paragraph 2, the word “**distracting**” can be replaced by:

- A. confusing
- B. interesting
- C. disturbing focus
- D. helpful

8. Inference:

What does the author suggest about “true communication”?

- A. It requires understanding and attention.
- B. It only happens online.
- C. It depends on technology.
- D. It means sharing pictures.

9. Sentence insertion:

**“For example, some families now use apps to share daily meals or plan events.”**

- A. After sentence 1 of paragraph 2
- B. After sentence 2 of paragraph 3
- C. Before the final sentence
- D. At the end of the passage

10. The author’s tone is:

- A. Neutral but thoughtful
- B. Angry and negative
- C. Humorous and casual
- D. Sarcastic