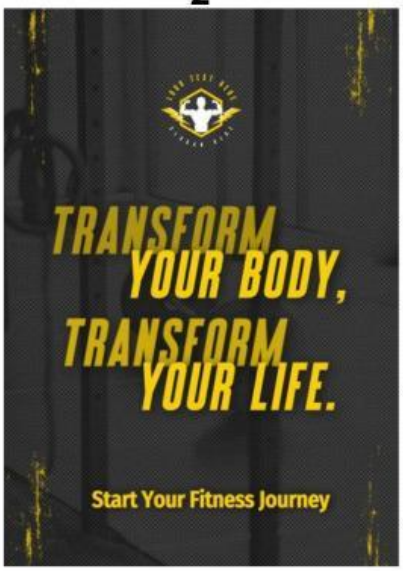
Reading

Task 1

Read the texts below. Match choices (A-H) to (1-5). There are three choices you do not need to use.

1

2



3

4

5

Which advertisement matches each statement?

A. It targets individuals who are willing to invest effort into reshaping their physical condition over time.

B. It is designed exclusively for highly experienced specialists in the field

C. This initiative is likely to attract people motivated by compassion rather than personal benefit.

D. It may appeal to those considering a shift towards a more technology-oriented professional path.

E. Participation requires long-distance travel on a regular basis.

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F. This opportunity encourages participants to develop independence and cooperation skills outside a typical classroom environment.
G. The service guarantees immediate results without any effort.
H. This option is particularly suitable for those aiming to enhance their ability to communicate across borders.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								

Task 2

Read the texts below. For questions (6 -10) choose the correct answers (A, B, C or D).

Why we can't stop lying

Let's begin with some honesty. You lie. I lie. Everyone lies. If you claim you don't, I regret to inform you that you've just proved my point. Researchers often say that lying is a normal human behaviour. In fact, one study reported that people lie several times a day, although many participants later admitted having underestimated the number. In other words, not only are we liars, but we are bad at counting our lies too.

Scientists have been curious about **this** for decades. In one classic experiment, researchers asked people about their habits, such as exercise, charity, and even voting. Most participants confidently insisted that they were responsible, healthy citizens. However, when the data was checked, it revealed a slightly different story. When confronted, some people explained that they had intended to behave better, while others simply refused to admit anything at all.

So why do we lie? Psychologists generally suggest that lying serves a purpose. In fact, experts argue that lying is often a learned behaviour with surprisingly deep roots. One of the reasons for lying is that it can be used as a shield. Many people admit to using lies to protect themselves from criticism or embarrassment. For example, you might tell your boss you missed a deadline because of technical issues when, in reality, you were watching videos. In that moment, a lie feels safer than the truth.

Another reason for telling lies is to control our image. Some psychologists claim that lying allows us to manage how others see us. By carefully editing reality, we can appear more successful, more interesting, or just more awake on Monday mornings. Social media is the perfect example: people rarely admit to having spent

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hours doing nothing. Instead, they prefer to present a polished version of their lives.

Experts warn that the more you lie, the easier it becomes. Over time, the brain may even see lying as the normal thing to do. Some researchers have gone so far as to suggest that repeated lying reduces the emotional reaction we normally feel when we are dishonest. In simple terms, your brain stops complaining.

Unfortunately, lying is often connected to deeper issues. Therapists frequently point out that anxiety, low self-esteem, or fear of rejection can all play a role. People who struggle with these feelings may feel compelled to create a safer version of reality to protect themselves from others. One expert explained that they use lying to cope with difficult situations in their lives, and it doesn't necessarily make them bad people.

Although lying is often considered an unacceptable behaviour, psychologists don't usually recommend trying to eliminate lying completely, which is lucky, because that would be impossible. Instead, they advise becoming more aware of it. Experts suggest paying attention to when you feel the need to lie. Is it when you're afraid of disappointing someone? Or when you want to avoid conflict? Next, they recommend taking a moment before speaking and asking yourself why. Another useful strategy is to practice small truths. Instead of pretending to be busy, you could simply say, "I'm too tired." It sounds terrifying, but many people later report feeling surprisingly better.

Finally, professionals often encourage finding one person you trust completely. Someone you can be honest with. Someone who won't judge you if you admit to having lied about eating the last slice of pizza.

6. What is the writer's main point in the first paragraph?

A. People tend to lie more often than they realise.
B. Liars usually feel guilty about their behaviour.
C. Scientists are unable to explain why people lie.
D. Research shows what people usually lie about.

7. What does 'this' refer to in the second paragraph?

A. The most common reason for lying in everyday situations.
B. The result of previous research into human behaviour.
C. The experiment that asks people about their habits.
D. The difference between people's answers and data.

8. In paragraph 3, why does the writer include the example of missing a deadline?

A. To explain that lying in a work environment is sometimes necessary.
B. To show that lying is acceptable when the truth can upset others.

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C. To suggest that a negative environment can cause dishonesty.

D. To prove that people lie to avoid negative consequences.

9. Why does the writer talk about social media in paragraph 4?

A. To show that people tend to be more honest online than in real life.

B. To suggest that dishonest behaviours can spread quickly online.

C. To illustrate how people hide some aspects of their lives.

D. To explain why people find it easy to talk about themselves online.

10. What is the writer's overall attitude towards lying?

A. It is a useful tool that people use in everyday situations.

B. It is a natural behaviour that people should reflect on.

C. It should be completely removed from people's behaviour.

D. It should be avoided unless it is strictly necessary.

Task 3

Read the texts below. Match choices (A-H) to (11 - 16). There are three choices you do not need to use.

11. Bran Castle, Transylvania, Romania

Along with Romania's Hunyad Castle and Poenari Castle, Bran Castle is often associated with the fictional tale of Count Dracula. Vlad III, Prince of Wallachia – otherwise known as Vlad III Dracula, or Vlad the Impaler – is thought to be the real-life inspiration for the titular monster in Bram Stoker's best-selling 1897 novel, Dracula. Legend states that during his lifetime, the real Vlad III was imprisoned in Bran Castle briefly in 1462. Dracula fans flock to Bran Castle and other Romanian sites to walk in the fabled footsteps of the fictional Count as well as the notorious real-life Prince.

12. Tower of London, England

One of England's most famous castles, the notorious Tower of London, boasts a chilling history of imprisonment, torture and death. In the 1070s, England's new king William the Conqueror had a vision to create an imposing royal residence, fortress and prison on the north bank of the River Thames. The resulting Tower of London with its central White Tower, surrounding buildings and battlements struck fear and submission into the hearts of its citizens. Individuals deemed guilty of crimes – both real and imagined – were locked up and made to endure cruel punishment. Bloody executions by beheading (including Henry VIII's second wife, Anne Boleyn) and suspicious murders within its walls added to the Tower's frightening reputation. By the 19th century, the Tower's gruesome past was put to rest and the property opened to the curious public. The Tower of London, with its shocking history, royal connections, and Crown Jewels, is now one of England's most popular tourist

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attractions. It's estimated that over two million people visit each year.

13. Urquhart Castle, Drumnadrochit, Scotland

Other famous castles may be more extravagant, or in better shape, but Urquhart Castle is notorious for its history and a particularly elusive neighbour. Built in the 13th century on the banks of Loch Ness, the highland castle spent 500 years deeply embroiled in several bloody battles. Up until the 17th century, Urquhart was a medieval stronghold. Its formidable tower, lakeside location and size – it was once one of Scotland's largest castles – made it an appealing target for both English and Scottish forces. After centuries of turmoil, Urquhart was finally abandoned in 1692. Fearing that enemies would seize Urquhart, fleeing soldiers blew up part of the castle to render it uninhabitable. What remains today is a beautiful ruin with a picture postcard vantage point of Loch Ness and the mysterious sea monster that's said to lurk beneath its dark waters.

14. Egeskov Castle, Funen, Denmark

Welcome to Europe's best-preserved renaissance water castle. Built in the middle of a lake in 1554, the famous castle's original purpose was to keep enemies at bay. With its surrounding moat, drawbridge, and battlements, Egeskov Castle was a difficult fortress to crack. Secret staircases, scalding holes, artillery ports and arrow slits allowed the castle's inhabitants to defend their property under cover. Today, Egeskov Castle is a peaceful destination. The grounds play host to mazes, extravagant gardens and a wealth of museums including collections devoted to vintage motorbikes and cars. And kids of all ages will fall in love with Titania's Palace, arguably the most impressive dollhouse in the world. Handmade in Ireland, the intricate mini castle features 18 elaborate rooms filled with handcrafted mahogany furniture and 3000 tiny works of art.

15. Neuschwanstein Castle, Schwangau, Germany

Neuschwanstein Castle is a romantic escape straight out of a fairy tale. Impossibly picturesque, the castle was commissioned by Ludwig II, the King of Bavaria, as his personal retreat in 1869. Ludwig II was a shy, yet eccentric constitutional monarch. Despite holding no real powers, Ludwig II clung to a romantic view of what a king should be. He fantasised about living as a recluse in a grand mountaintop palace surrounded by inspirational art and stunning architecture. As a result, Neuschwanstein Castle was born. In 1886, 'The Fairy Tale King' drowned mysteriously, but his famous castle lives on in the hearts of the millions of admirers who visit each year. One such fan, Walt Disney, was so enamoured with Neuschwanstein Castle that it's believed that he modelled Disneyland's Sleeping Beauty Castle on its magnificent design.

16. Swallow's Nest, Yalta, Ukraine

Perched precariously on a steep cliff overlooking the Black Sea, the Swallow's Nest was commissioned in 1911 by German oil magnate, Baron von Steingel. Tiny and compact at only 20 metres long and 10 metres wide, the Swallow's Nest was originally built as a token of love. According to local legend, a smitten von Steingel had the mini Neo-Gothic castle created for his rumoured mistress, a ballerina. More

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than a hundred years later, the 'Castle of Love' with its sweeping view of the sea, manages to fire the imagination.

This _____

A. fortress was once used as a royal residence and later became notorious for imprisonment and executions.
B. ruined castle is strongly connected to centuries of military conflict and a local legend about a mysterious creature.
C. building is a modern financial centre used for international banking and corporate headquarters.
D. castle was created as a secluded personal retreat for a monarch who idealised romantic and artistic living conditions.
E. small castle was built as a romantic gesture and is located dramatically on a cliff above the sea.
F. site is mainly known for hosting large-scale winter sports competitions and ski championships.
G. place combines a real historical figure with a fictional literary character that inspired a famous horror novel.
H. medieval stronghold was originally built on water for defensive purposes and is now used as a cultural and family attraction site.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
11								
12								
13								
14								
15								

Task 4

Read the text below. Choose from (A-H) the one which best fits each space (17 - 22). There are three choices you do not need to use.

Gabriela worked for a multinational company as a successful project manager in Brazil and was transferred to manage a team in Sweden. She was excited about her new role but soon realised that managing her new team would be a challenge.

Despite their friendliness, Gabriela didn't feel respected as a leader. Her new staff would question her proposals openly in meetings, and when she gave them

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instructions on how to carry out a task, they would often go about it in their own way without checking with her. When she announced her decisions on the project, they would continue giving their opinions as if it was still up for discussion.

After weeks of frustration, Gabriela emailed her Swedish manager about the issues she was facing with her team. (17) _____ Her manager simply asked her if she felt her team was still performing, and what she thought would help her better collaborate with her team members.

What Gabriela was experiencing was a cultural clash in expectations. She was used to a more hierarchical framework where the team leader and manager took control and gave specific instructions on how things were to be done, (18) _____ This more directive management style worked well for her and her team in Brazil but did not transfer well to her new team in Sweden.

Dutch social psychologist Geert Hofstede uses the concept of 'power distance' to describe how power is distributed and how hierarchy is perceived in different cultures. In her previous work environment, Gabriela was used to a high power distance culture where power and authority are respected and everyone has their rightful place, (19) _____ In such a culture, leaders make the big decisions and are not often challenged.

Her Swedish team, however, were used to working in a low power distance culture where subordinates often work together with their bosses to find solutions and make decisions. Leaders act as coaches or mentors who encourage independent thought and expect to be challenged.

When Gabriela became aware of the cultural differences between her and her team, she took the initiative to have an open conversation with them about their feelings about her leadership. (20) _____ Pleased to be asked for their thoughts, Gabriela's team openly expressed that they were not used to being told what to do.

They also explained that when Gabriela gave very direct instructions, (21) _____ This helped both sides understand that their expectations of leadership were very different.

With a better understanding of the underlying reasons behind each other's behaviour, Gabriela and her team were able to adapt their way of working. (22) _____ Gabriela was then able to make adjustments to her management style so as to better fit the expectations of her team.

A. she did not receive clear guidance on how to resolve the situation
B. instead of a more collaborative and flexible approach
C. this often made them feel that their own expertise was not valued
D. which made her question whether she was being an effective manager
E. they saw it as a lack of trust in their professional abilities
F. this type of management worked well in her previous workplace
G. her manager encouraged her to reflect on her own leadership style
H. which led to a gradual improvement in team communication and trust

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	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
16								
17								
18								
19								
20								

Use of English

Task 5

Read the text below. For questions (23-27) choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D).

Social media, magazines and shop windows **(23)** _____ people daily with things to buy, and British consumers are buying more clothes and shoes than ever before. Online shopping means it is easy for customers to buy without thinking, while major brands offer such cheap clothes that they can be treated like disposable items – worn two or three times and then thrown away.

In Britain, the average person spends more than £1,000 on new clothes a year, which is around four per cent of their income. That might not sound like much, but that figure hides two far more worrying trends for society and for the environment. First, a lot of that consumer spending is via credit cards. British people currently **(24)** _____ approximately £670 per adult to credit card companies. That's 66 per cent of the average wardrobe budget. Also, not only are people spending money they don't have, they're using it to buy things they don't need. Britain **(25)** _____ 300,000 tons of clothing a year, most of which goes into landfill sites.

People might not **(26)** _____ they are part of the disposable clothing problem because they donate their unwanted clothes to charities. But charity shops can't sell all those unwanted clothes. 'Fast fashion' **(27)** _____ of fashion as quickly as it came in and is often too poor quality to recycle; people don't want to buy it second-hand. Huge quantities end up being thrown away, and a lot of clothes that charities can't sell are sent abroad, causing even more economic and environmental problems.

	A	B	C	D
23	suppress	bombard	surround	impress
24	owe	give	get	present
25	give away	take out	throw away	go through
26	suppose	suggest	believe	realize
27	goes out	come in	go away	come out

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Task 6

Read the text below. For questions (28-32) choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D).

If we look around us at the things we have purchased at some point in our lives, we (28) _____ no doubt notice that not everything we own is being put to good use: the thick woollen coat which we thought looked trendy despite the fact that we live in a tropical country, the smartphone that got put away when we bought ourselves the newest model, the car that only gets used at the weekends, or even the guest room in our house that somehow got turned into a storeroom.

Those underutilised items may seem useless to some, but could be an asset to **(29)** _____. With the advent of the internet, online communities have figured out a way to generate profit from the sharing of those underused assets. Using websites and social media groups that facilitate the buying and selling of second-hand goods, it is now easier than ever for peer-to-peer sharing activities to take place. And this **(30)** _____ known as the sharing economy.

These democratised online platforms are providing a chance for people to make a quick buck or two. To give an example, busy parents previously might not have bothered with setting up a stall at the local market or car boot sale to sell their children's old equipment, but with online marketplaces, parents are now able to sell on those hardly worn baby clothes that their children have outgrown and the expensive pushchairs and baby equipment they have invested in, so as to put some cash back **(31)** _____ their pockets.

Businesses have also caught on to the profitability of the sharing economy and are seeking to gain from making use of those underutilised resources. A business model that has rapidly risen in popularity sees companies providing an online platform that puts customers in contact with those who can provide a particular product or service. Companies like Airbnb act **(32)** _____ a middleman for people to cash in on their unused rooms and houses and let them out as lucrative accommodation. Another example is Uber, which encourages people to use their own personal cars as taxis to make some extra cash in their free time.

	A	**B**	**C**	**D**
28	would	will	would have	will be
29	others	the others	other's	other
30	are	is	was	be
31	at	in	into	on
32	like	as	for	with

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