

NAME: _____ Group: _____

Read the text and answer the questions that follow.

The Hole-in-the-Wall Project

- I Many people saw the 2008 Indian film *Slumdog Millionaire*. Some people know that it was based on a book called *Q & A* by an Indian diplomat named Vikas Swarup. But few people are aware that he was originally inspired by a project known as the "Hole-in-the-Wall", which helps educate slum children in India.
- II The project's founder, Dr Sugata Mitra, was convinced – after hearing colleagues talking about their children's success with computers – that children everywhere could learn to use a computer if only they had the chance. In 1999, he tested his theory by putting a computer in a "hole in the wall" between the grounds of the research institute where he worked in India and the slum next to it. Through monitoring with a hidden camera, Mitra was able to observe how the local population operated the computer. Most were children aged 6 to 12, and although they had little formal education and almost no English, within a few days they had worked out how to use the Internet and how to draw on the computer.
- III Similar experiments in other areas produced similar results: the children soon became computer literate even when they lacked the standard vocabulary to describe what they were doing. One child, when asked by a journalist how he knew what to do with the computer, replied, "What is a computer?" Other children invented their own terms for computer parts or actions – for example, they called the mouse a *sui*, the Hindi for "needle", and the hourglass symbol, which indicates that users should wait, the *damru*, or drum.
- IV Today, the project has spread to many other areas both in India and abroad, and Mitra is continuing his experiments in "Minimally Invasive Education", based on the theory that children learn best when they receive the least instruction. Now he wants to see if children can become creators of computer programs as well as users. So if one day you come across a working computer left in an unusual place, don't be afraid to play around with it – you may have become part of Mitra's research.

1. Choose the correct answer.

1. Vikas Swarup
a. starred in the film *Slumdog Millionaire*
b. inspired the Hole-in-the-Wall project
c. was the author of *Q & A*
2. "Minimally Invasive Education" believes that children learn best
a. in their own language
b. with very little instruction
c. when instructed on the computer

2. Decide whether the following sentences are true (T) or false (F). Find evidence in the text to justify your answers.

..... 1. The children knew Dr Sugata Mitra was watching them.

.....

..... 2. Dr Sugata Mitra taught the children how to draw on the computer.

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..... 3. The Hole-in-the-Wall project is no longer just in India.

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3. Answer the question.

What was surprising about the results of the experiment?

4 Complete the sentences.

1. Dr Sugata Mitra believed that if

.....

2. The kids worked out how to use the computer despite

.....

3. *Sui* and *damru* are examples of

.....

5. Find words or expressions in the text that mean the same as:

1. discovered (paragraph II)

2. didn't have (paragraph III)

3. names (paragraph III)

4. find (paragraph IV)