

Part 4 (8 points, 1 point per item). Read the text about advances in gaming. For questions 43–50, complete the answers by inserting **no more than one word** from the text. There is an example (0).

The advances in gaming in the last decade

There were open-world games before 2004, but the era of *GTA V*, *Assassin's Creed*, *Far Cry*, *Skyrim* and *Witcher* has seen the level design evolve from linear experiences to playful experimental spaces. Open-world games have encouraged players to be more curious, creative and collaborative, and that's been amazing to watch.

Before the broadband era, it was difficult for small teams to get their games seen by a large number of players. But gradually we had *Xbox Live*, the *App Store* and *Steam*, and a broader audience for independent productions was created. Later, cheap or free tools, such as *Game Maker*, became accessible. All of this combined to give small studios the tools and support to make brilliant games, from the deeply personal to the deeply political.

With broadband internet, we also got the irresistible growth of online multiplayer gaming, overtaking both the sofa-based experience of traditional two-player console games and the local area network complexity of early 1990s PC titles. The arrival of friends' lists and mass online get-togethers allowed us to meet up on virtual battlefields and in simulated sports arenas to compete, or also just to chat. Games became shared social spaces and benefited the community enormously.

It used to be that games existed in a cultural ghetto kept away from other art forms. Now there are video games at the *Tate Gallery* and in the *Victoria and Albert Museum*. There are theatre companies, art collectives, television shows and movies drawing heavily from the aesthetics and structure of games. Arguably the best TV series of the last year, *Westworld*, is a commentary on the ethics of virtual violence.

It is inarguably a good thing that video games are being made and played by a wider spectrum of people than ever before. From the millions of commuters engrossed by *Candy Crush Saga* to the small communities exploring gender and identity issues through visual novels, there are more voices, more points of view and more opportunities to see heroes like you being available and controllable on screen.

In the past, if you wanted to make your own *Doom* levels, you had to be technically literate. Then along came games, such as *Minecraft* and *The Sims*, and user creativity rose to the forefront as vast communities grew up around building and sharing content. Games are no longer to be consumed and discarded; many have become universal creative workshops.

A lot of the people who make games are getting older and more thoughtful. At the same time, new people are entering the medium who understand games as a form of self-expression, rather than just as entertainment products. This has led to shifts in the storylines of games, away from saving the princess and towards more complex ideas of redemption and self-discovery. Titles such as *Bioshock* and *Valiant Hearts* have all explored dark, difficult themes while also making us feel part of the action.

This has been a decade of extraordinary creativity. What we do within games now depends on our choices. If you want to spend hours in *GTA V* just playing golf, or working out how to blow up planes, you totally can. As G. K. Chesterton once wrote, "It might reasonably be maintained that the true object of all human life is play."

But what do I really think about the last 14 years of this industry? I'll borrow the final words from my favourite game series of the decade, and perhaps of all time, *Portal*. "This was a triumph. I'm making a note here: huge success. It's hard to overstate my satisfaction."

0. *What effect did the transition from linear experiences to experimental spaces have on video game players?*

Players were encouraged to be more adventurous.

43. What impact did broadband internet have on computer games?

The games created by small studios became _____ to a broader audience.

44. What kind of social experience did broadband internet create?

Friends' lists and online multiplayer gaming _____ players by creating shared social spaces.

45. Why does the reviewer mention the fact that games can be found in art museums, theatres, and on television?

He wants to show that games have a growing influence on _____ aspects of life.

46. Why is the greater diversity of game designers and players a good thing?

According to the reviewer, this provides more opportunities for _____ different issues.

47. Compared to the past, which ability is appreciated by the gaming community?

Player _____ has become more important, because the creation and development of game content have become part of the entertainment itself.

48. What has happened to games since a new generation began designing?

There have been _____ in the themes of games.

49. What opportunities do modern video games provide?

They allow players to make _____.

50. How does the reviewer express his opinion about the last 14 years of the video game industry?

The reviewer chooses to _____ someone else's words to express his satisfaction.