



Match texts A-G with headings 1-8. Each number can only be used once. There is one extra heading. Write your answers in the table.

- 1 Why speech helps
- 2 How human speech is unique
- 3 When speech began
- 4 How we learn to speak

- 5 Why speech disorders develop
- 6 How speech is produced
- 7 When we can speak
- 8 Not only for humans

A The main organ of speech is the voice box in the throat, which contains the vocal cords. These vibrate as the breath passes over them, and can be loosened and tightened to create a lower or higher sound. The tongue, in combination with the lips, the teeth or the roof of the mouth, does the job of cutting these vowel-type sounds to create consonants. There are a minority of sounds that are generated solely in the mouth – for example, the clicks in the San languages of Southern Africa – but these are the exceptions to the rule.

B The origins of speech are the subject of much discussion, with little in the way of conclusion. This is to be expected, since spoken language is almost certainly 200,000 years old and quite possibly older. Experts tend to look at the bone structure of skeletons found back then to determine if the throats were shaped to produce the complex sounds that speech requires. In fact, anthropologists are not even sure whether humans are the only species ever to speak. Neanderthal anatomy shows some evidence that they could also have been capable of basic speech.

C There are experts that argue speech is far more widespread than we might expect. They point to parrots and other birds, capable of acquiring huge vocabularies when kept as pets; to monkeys, prairies dogs and other small mammals who have warning cries of predators that include information about what type of predator it is; to chimpanzees and gorillas that scientists taught sign language to, and who seemed to attempt actual sentences over time.

D There does seem to be a fundamental difference between human speech and animal communication – or perhaps two. The first is grammar. Human speech is not just sounds indicating things; it is a sophisticated code where the sequence of words indicates some relationship, adds a new layer of meaning. The second is what is called 'modality independence'. This means that if a baby is born without the ability to speak with its throat and mouth, it will use another means to 'speak' – sign language, for example.

E There was in the past the idea that a baby's mind was a blank slate to write the language it came into contact with upon, but this model is simplistic and limited. The infinite complexity and possibilities of speech could not be taught one word or sentence at a time. Rather, a baby's brain is 'hard-wired' to use language. In other words, just as a baby's muscles are programmed to walk, pick things up, blink and so on, so its brain is programmed to learn language.

F A child is generally able to speak a language fluently by the age of 3-4. Between those ages, the child learns to say his or her name and age clearly, speak 250 to 500 words, answer simple questions, speak in sentences of five to six words, and tell stories. Just a few years later, the active vocabulary has moved into the thousands, able to be combined through the grammar into infinite combinations.

G We take speech for granted, but imagine a world without it. Any learning would have to be done by demonstration, every warning with cries and pointed fingers. Speech allows us to transmit information over time, from one generation to the next, preserving and building on a precious store of knowledge. Speech allows us to live in large communities, to discuss things rather than fight over them, to negotiate and come to harmonious solutions.

Ответ:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G