

READING: SKIMMING A TEXT



1 Read topic sentences A–E in the article. Match each one with the most likely summary 1–5.

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| 1 Evidence from a piece of research. | _____ |
| 2 The value of time away from work. | _____ |
| 3 How to reduce our use of handheld devices. | _____ |
| 4 How technology affects our behavior. | _____ |
| 5 Tips to help you concentrate. | _____ |



- A We're all multitaskers now, performing two or more tasks at the same time. Whether it's e-mailing a colleague while checking our smartphone, or writing an essay while catching up on the latest online celebrity gossip, we're all doing it. But should we? Well, recent research suggests it's time to stop demanding so much of our brain and go back to focusing on one thing at a time.
- B Consider the results of a study of workers at a software company. When they stopped working on a major task to answer an e-mail or message, it took ten minutes to be able to fully concentrate again on the original task. Clearly this is not an efficient way of working. Training ourselves to concentrate isn't easy, but psychologist Maria Sylva has some tips:

- C Let your mind focus on one thing at a time. Whatever task you're doing, make sure you give it your full attention. Giving 100% to the task in hand will help you work more quickly and more accurately. At the beginning, this might be tough, so start with short periods, say ten minutes, and gradually increase the amount of time.
- D If your smartphone is the main source of distraction, leave it at home. If you really believe the next message you receive will be more interesting or important than your current activity, ask yourself why you are doing that activity.
- E Give your brain a rest. You'll achieve more if, several times a day, you walk away from tasks that require concentration. And I mean "walk away." Don't just look away from your screen or stare out of the window. Get up and leave your desk. If possible, get some fresh air. Taking a complete break will help your brain to come up with new ideas.

2 Read the whole article, then choose the best ending for each sentence.

- 1 Maria Sylva wants us to consider whether
 - a technology is a good thing in our lives.
 - b we should be doing so many things at once.
 - c we should use smartphones.
- 2 The study that she refers to shows that we lose time when we
 - a change the task we are working on.
 - b only use e-mail to communicate at work.
 - c don't concentrate hard enough at work.
- 3 She claims we make fewer mistakes when we
 - a work quickly.
 - b work for ten minutes at a time.
 - c concentrate fully on a task.
- 4 She tells us not to take a smartphone with us if
 - a the messages we get on it are not interesting.
 - b it prevents us from giving attention to what we are doing.
 - c we leave the house.
- 5 She recommends
 - a putting off tasks that need us to concentrate.
 - b taking regular short breaks from work.
 - c looking away from our screens occasionally.

3 Complete the text with the correct pronouns and possessive adjectives.

Maria Sylva is a life coach. ¹ _____ advises people on how to manage ² _____ time. Most of ³ _____ work is done inside companies where she coaches people at all levels, helping ⁴ _____ perform to the best of their ability while ⁵ _____ are working. Maria thoroughly enjoys her job and finds ⁶ _____ very satisfying. Her aim is to help ⁷ _____ accomplish the most that we possibly can during ⁸ _____ working day.