USES OF LEISURE TIME

Words

Look for the following words as you read the passage. Match each word with its correct definition.

Words	Definitions
1. acknowledge	A. adj., not active
2. authority	B. adv., only
3. chunk	C. n., a strong feeling such as anger or love
4. crucial	D. n., a large piece
5. deliberately	E. v., to admit, accept as true
6. depression	F. adj., very important
7. emotion	G. adj., overpowering; very large
8. engage	H. v., to refresh, restore
9. industrious	I. adv., intentionally, on purpose
10. intellectual	J. n., person with power or special knowledge
11. merely	K. v., to participate in something
12. obesity	L. n., a free-time activity
13. obvious	M. adj., not wanting to do something; unwilling
14. overwhelming	N. adj., related to thinking
15. passive	O. adj., easy to see, clear
16. pastime	P. v., to experience something difficult or painful
17. physical	Q. adj., related to the body
18. rejuvenate	R. adj., hardworking
19. reluctant	S. n., constant sadness
20. suffer	T. n., the condition of being very overweight

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Reading

Uses of Leisure Time

A
Although it may seem that people are working more, studies show that we have more leisure time than ever before. Yet researchers are reporting higher levels of both stress and obesity. These reports appear to be a sign that we are not using our leisure time to our best advantage.

B
Health experts agree that the best way to restore body and mind is to spend time in nature pursuing a comfortable level of physical exercise. Spending time in natural surroundings is especially crucial now because, for the first time, a majority of the world's population live in cities. Recent studies show that intellectual function weakens as a result of the energy expended simply sorting out the overwhelming stimuli of city life. Tests demonstrate that people suffer decreases in attention span, memory, and problem-solving ability after taking a short walk on a busy city street or merely seeing pictures of city life. Tests also show that time spent in the city results in a decreased ability to concentrate and to control emotions and impulses. On the other hand, spending time in the country produces the opposite effects.

C
Unfortunately, as society becomes more centered[1] on city life, we have to rejuvenate ourselves in nature deliberately rather than as a matter of course. Yet research shows that we are not spending our leisure time rejuvenating ourselves. Around the world, the most popular way to spend free time is watching television. This, the most passive of pastimes, is how Americans spend more than half their leisure time. Globally, the next most popular is using the Internet, also passive, and it ranks as the most favored[2] among the billions in China. The third is shopping, which may be slightly more active but is still as far from nature as possible. Modern shopping malls remove shoppers from everything natural, leaving them to experience the outdoors only between the paved parking lot[3] and the mall doors.

[1]BrE: centred
[2]BrE: favoured
[3]BrE: car park

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D

Children are most negatively affected by city life. Parents are reluctant to let children play freely in the city, fearing for their health and safety, and nature is something many children in the city may never have a chance to experience. Childhood obesity and depression are reaching epidemic levels. Authorities have begun to acknowledge the problem, and innovative programs[4] that give children an opportunity to spend time in nature are being introduced in countries around the world.

E

Vacations[5] are the most obvious chunk of leisure time. The countries with the most vacation time are Italy, with an average of forty-two days a year, and France, with thirty-seven. The industrious Americans have the least: thirteen days. Yet the country most satisfied with their vacations are not the Italians but the British. The British usually divide up their vacation time, taking it in pieces throughout the year rather than all at once. Of all nationalities, the British spend the most time vacationing outdoors in their national-trust parks, where they engage in a comfortable level of physical activity. The British report the greatest satisfaction with their leisure time. Perhaps the rest of the world would do well to follow their lead.

Answer the questions about **Uses of Leisure Time.**

Questions 1–3

The reading passage contains five paragraphs, ***A–E.***
Which paragraphs discuss the following information?
Write the correct letter, ***A–E.***

_____ 1. The most popular pastimes in different countries around the world

_____ 2. Why it is crucial to spend time in nature

_____ 3. In which country people spend the largest chunk of vacation time engaged in outdoor activities

[4]BrE: programmes
[5]BrE: Holidays

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Questions 4–6

*Choose the correct letter, **A**, **B**, **C**, or **D**.*

4. We can best rejuvenate ourselves by spending time engaged in
   - **A** physical activities.
   - **B** passive activities.
   - **C** activities with children.
   - **D** activities in the city.

5. When children do not spend time in nature, they
   - **A** fear for their health and safety.
   - **B** suffer from obesity and depression.
   - **C** are reluctant to spend time with their parents.
   - **D** have more time to develop their intellectual functioning.

6. The overwhelming character of city life affects our
   - **A** interest in nature.
   - **B** choice of pastimes.
   - **C** relationships with children.
   - **D** emotions and intellectual function.

My Words

Write the words that are new to you. Look them up in the dictionary and write their definitions.

Words	Definitions

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