

READING (ЕГЭ задание 12)

Прочитайте текст и выполните задания 12–18. В каждом задании запишите в поле ответа цифру 1, 2, 3 или 4, соответствующую выбранному Вами варианту ответа.

Just how golden is silence?

For the British, it's a well known social law that in several, if not most, public spaces, silence is key. Those who dare speak in a London tube carriage, particularly during rush hours, are condemned to receive dirty looks from other passengers for the duration of their journey.

Waiting for a bus? No, now is simply *not* the time to discuss last night's soap opera. And beware, the poor, poor individual who fails to stifle his or her sneeze in an art gallery.

Yet in recent years, it would appear that the ascent of the portable electronic devices has meant that the world is no longer merely our oyster, but also our ... office. We're able to reply to e-mails, finish our essays and fill out tax returns just about anywhere. As a result of this modernization, we find ourselves placing excess value on the level of quiet. As students, I'm sure we've all been there. Ever tried to study in a coffee shop and found yourself infuriated by the precise details of your neighbour's health?

Today's smartphones, tablets and lightweight laptops allow us to blur the boundary between work and play, which in many respects is fantastic. However, this ease of use sometimes prevents us from being our natural, social selves at times when this is required. Just ask Alex Haigh, the Australian founder of the humorous website stopphubbing.com. This site campaigns against the 'phubbing' phenomena – a term coined by Haigh which hybridises 'phone snubbing'.

Whatever happened to the beauty of mundane conversation? You know, of the glorious 'Would you look at the weather!' or the 'How's your dog?' variety? I for one have sat through many an awkward mid-tutorial break, twiddling my thumbs as those around me reach for their iPhones. Eventually, I cave, too. Clearly everyone in the room is extremely sociable – if this can be judged by a sky-high score in video messaging applications. Yet through some unfortunate twist of fate, it just so happens that the exact individuals my pupils absolutely *must* speak to are anywhere but our current classroom.

Spontaneous phone-enthusiasm is most definitely a 21st century malady. And it's one we've prescribed ourselves to avoid our dreaded fear of awkward silences. Of course, conversation with near-strangers (or even friends) can be difficult.

When asked how I am, I often struggle to think of a more varied answer than merely 'fine'. Sometimes, I am not fine, and instead concerned with various job applications, endless

seminar reading and a formidable pile of washing up in my kitchen. However, actually managing to expand on my current state of mind usually leads to a conversation I don't regret having.

Chit-chat is rather like going to the gym – arduous at first, but afterwards you're pleased you made the effort. However, a sudden and excessive interest in any technology we have on our person gives those around us the impression that it's them we want to avoid, not the 'er ...' that may result from wondering what to say next.

Of course, being quiet is entirely appropriate in a number of situations. However, the small talk which develops into a great conversation is at risk of being phased out by easily accessible 3G. After all, it is the opportunity to totally relax and engage with our peers, as well as the exciting possibilities that just might arise from a polite 'How are you?', that should remain truly golden.

12. At the beginning of the article the author says that it used to be polite in Britain to ...

- 1) avoid looking at people.
- 2) keep silence in public places.
- 3) talk while travelling.
- 4) sneeze in public places.

13. What did portable electronic devices change in our lives, according to the author?

- 1) We now need silence more than ever.
- 2) We work mostly outside an office.
- 3) We do school tasks in a hurry.
- 4) We are getting angry with people around.

14. "Phone snubbing" in paragraph 3 ("...a term coined by Haigh which hybridises "phone snubbing") is synonymous with ...

- 1) making jokes.
- 2) using phone.
- 3) campaigning.
- 4) being rude.

15. When everybody around uses phones during mid-tutorial breaks, the author ...

- 1) starts sending video messages.
- 2) begins to talk about the weather.
- 3) follows their example.
- 4) tries to speak to her pupils.

16. According to the author, 'phone-enthusiasm' is the result of ...

- 1) talking with strangers.
- 2) feeling embarrassed.
- 3) exchanging awkward greetings.
- 4) a stressful lifestyle.

17. Chatting is compared to a physical exercise because the author thinks it is ...

- 1) a rewarding experience.
- 2) enhanced by technology.
- 3) impressive for people around.
- 4) an exercise for your brain.

18. What is the author's message, as stated in the last paragraph?

- 1) Spend more time with friends.
- 2) Try not to make noise.
- 3) Find good 3G connection.
- 4) Do not be afraid of small talk.

12	13	14	15	16	17	18