

SECTION 2 READING

TASK:

You are going to read an article about poetry. Six sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A–G** the one which fits each gap (37–42). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Poetry

Teenager Peter Rayner writes about his new-found love of poetry.

Until about a year ago, if you mentioned the word 'poetry' to me, my instant reaction would always have been the same: 'Boring!' And I'm sure the response would be the same from many people my age. But then recently I've discovered that by rejecting poetry so completely, I've really been missing out.

It's not that I was previously unaware of poetry. I've been lucky enough to grow up in a household where my parents and older sister love literature, and I've always loved reading, especially crime novels – I read one a week, on average. **37** They seemed to have little to say about what I was feeling.

Then one day I came across an anthology of poems for young people. On the first page, the editor had written an introduction in which he explained that poems are not just there to be studied in classrooms. **38** He reckoned that poetry often helps people to find some kind of peace when times get tough. I was really struck by that, and began to think that maybe poetry did have relevance for me after all.

After I'd read the book, I started to see that poetry is all around us, whether we realise it or not. If you don't believe me, just think of song lyrics, rap and football chants. There were so many times I'd been swept away by the lyrics of various rappers and bands. **39**

So there it was – I'd actually been listening to poetry all along! This made me start reading poetry seriously for the first time. **40** That was a great feeling. Poems spoke to me directly whilst still offering food for thought. I even started to write my own terrible raps! Poetry was now definitely cool as far as I was concerned.

41 Did you know, for example, that spoken word performances, combined with music, were the major literary form of the ancient world? They were popular with Greek storytellers who'd tell their stories while a musician accompanied them on the harp. I suppose the modern day equivalents would be poetry performed to a reggae soundtrack, poems about social observations, or poets drawing on influences from the hip hop scene.

Anyway, I started trawling the internet to see if there were any performance poets who were my age. I found myself googling them and it wasn't long before I discovered some teenage poets who were performing alone or with musicians. **42** I've seen some of them live and they're brilliant. I've now been inspired to have a go at writing more serious poetry and maybe one day I'll try performing it too.

- A** Their stuff has really taken off online and even at music festivals.
- B** Poems, however, just never appealed to me in the same way.
- C** And I could understand it without having to be taught what it meant.

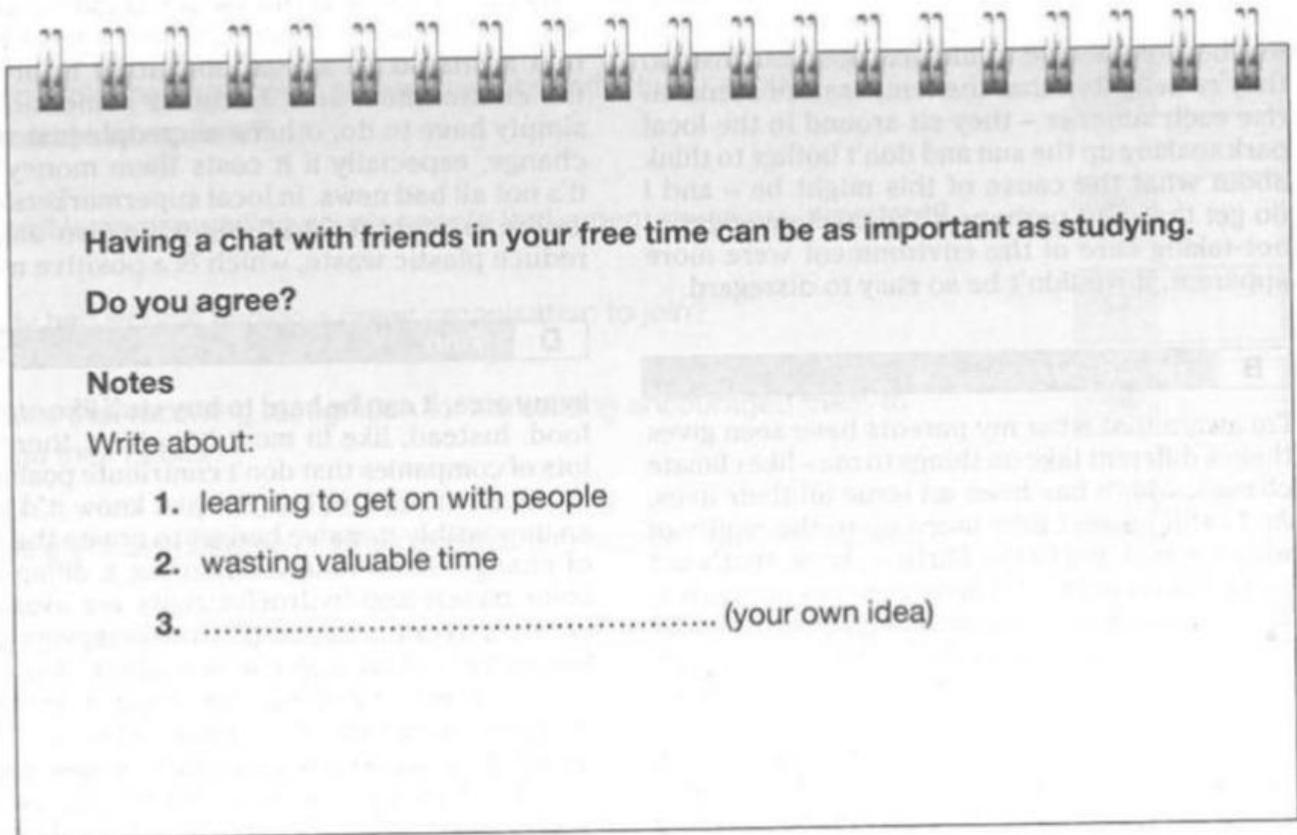
- D** In spite of this, I began writing them myself.
- E** All of this is nothing new.
- F** Reading them can provide support for us at any time in our lives.
- G** I'd simply never, ever thought of them as poetry.

SECTION 3 – WRITING

TASK:

- 1 In your English class you have been talking about free time. Now your English teacher has asked you to write an essay for homework.

Write your essay using **all** the notes and giving reasons for your point of view.



Having a chat with friends in your free time can be as important as studying.

Do you agree?

Notes

Write about:

1. learning to get on with people
2. wasting valuable time
3. (your own idea)

***Write between 160 & 200 words.**