

Reading and Use of English Part 7 Gapped text

What to expect in the exam

Part 7 consists of a text from which six paragraphs have been removed and placed in random order after the text. You decide which paragraph fits best in each gap in the text.

- SPEAK** Work in pairs. Read the heading and subheading of the article below. How would pupils benefit from being *brave, resilient and kind*?
- Read the article (ignoring the questions in *italics*). Are any of your ideas from Exercise 1 mentioned?

BETTER PEOPLE MAKE BETTER STUDENTS

Hilary Wilce explains the importance of teaching pupils to be *brave, resilient and kind*.

Character matters. In fact, it matters more than anything else when it comes to doing well in school – and life. Yet parents and schools are actively preventing children from developing their inner resources, either by being too neglectful, or by never allowing them to fail.

1

↑ *Read the missing paragraphs to identify anything 'its' and 'it' might refer to.*

But its main concern is with poor children. It looks at why so many educational interventions fail to help disadvantaged students do better, and demonstrates that it is things like perseverance and determination that ultimately help children succeed. This old-fashioned notion would have been common once but appears to have vanished from the modern world.

2

↑ *Look at the first sentence below. In the missing paragraph above, will the writer be expressing a positive or a negative reaction?*

This was not because I disagreed with its thesis but because I was deep into researching what seemed at first glance to be the same subject. US social affairs reporter Paul Tough had produced *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity and the Hidden Power of Character*. The working title of my book was *Backbone: What Children Need, Aren't Getting and How to Give it Back to Them*.

In the paragraph above, the writer uses the phrase 'at first glance'. What does this phrase usually indicate? How do writers or texts usually continue after using this phrase?

3

Drawing on neuroscience, economics, psychology and child development, Tough shows how qualities such as self-mastery and optimism are what make children succeed, and how, in the light of this, good parenting and character-based schooling can make all the difference. It's a persuasive argument, and for anyone involved in creating educational policy, it should be forced reading, so they can see how playing around with school structures can never, by itself, help pupils do better.

4

↑ *In the paragraph below, is the writer talking about 'Backbone' (her own book) or 'How Children Succeed' (Paul Tough's book)? How do you know?*

On the way, it looks at the research showing how children are becoming more self-absorbed and less able to deal with setbacks, and outlines how this in turn is making them less equipped to work with others and bounce back from disappointments. All this sprang out of the growing unease I felt as I spent time in schools. As a journalist, I was usually there to write about 'development' in education – a revamped curriculum, or inventive method of teaching – yet it seemed to me that pupils' attitudes were too often sabotaging the very things designed to help them. And not, alas, in any exhilaratingly rebellious way.

5

↑ *Who might 'one' and 'another' be referring to in the paragraph below? How do you know?*

One said each new intake of students seemed less willing to share or even hang their own coats on their own pegs. Another complained about the staggering sense of entitlement many pupils now demonstrated – if he gave them poor marks for a piece of work, they felt it was never because they could have done better, but only because he was 'picking on' them. (And often, he said, their parents agreed.)

6

↑ *What do you understand by the phrases 'tomorrow's adults' and 'to draw on personal resources' in the paragraph below? (These are likely to be referred to in some way in the missing paragraph above.)*

All this matters desperately because in a competitive world, tomorrow's adults will have to draw deeply on their personal resources to navigate life's constant changes. A good life demands courage, resilience, honesty and kindness. This is the true spine of success, without which we are all jellyfish. And since no-one wants their child to be a jellyfish, our prime job as parents – and teachers – has to be to help our children build the backbone they need.

How to go about it

Part 7 tests your understanding of text structure. Therefore, it is important to carefully read through the gapped text to get a sense of how ideas or an argument is developed.

3 Read the article again. For each gap, carefully read the paragraphs on either side, together with the questions in *italics*. Look for pronouns, synonyms or paraphrases that may refer back or forwards to objects, people, events or ideas mentioned in the previous or next paragraph.

4 Six paragraphs have been removed from the article. Choose from the paragraphs A–G the one which fits each gap (1–6). There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use.

A Rather, children seemed distracted, or else worryingly devoted to getting things 'right'. And when I started to ask teachers about this, I released a tsunami of anxiety about the everyday behaviour they were seeing in school.

B Reaction to both these publications was diverse, and it wasn't just parents who responded. And while they had much in common, there was one aspect of his research that seemed dubious to me.

C But when I got over myself and settled down to read his work, I realised we were approaching the same important territory from different angles. His is a brilliantly readable account of the growing evidence that inner resources count more than any amount of extra teaching when it comes to overcoming educational disadvantage.

D Meanwhile, universities were raising the alarm about how today's 'satnav' students seemed less able to think for themselves. A toxic combination of teaching to the test at school and parents hovering over their lives was starting to mean that even those headed for the most prestigious universities were helpless when they first had to fend for themselves.

E This is the message of a new education book that has been topping the best-seller charts in the US. It has caused great debate by pointing out that over-attentive parenting is associated with rising rates of anxiety and failure among the young generation.

F My book, by contrast, is being written specifically for parents to show what strength of character consists of. It identifies six key values that, when knitted together, give a person deep-rooted focus, integrity and resilience, and suggests an outline for encouraging children to grow the 'backbone' of these qualities.

G But, as this book shows, character is badly in need of a comeback, and some pioneering schools are already starting to put it at the heart of their curriculum. It's a timely message, yet last summer, when the book was first published, it had me grinding my teeth in fury.

