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Pre-intermidiate 2024 Midterm Test - READING (20 marks)

1 Read the article and tick (✓) A, B, or C.

NEW YEAR, OLD CUSTOMS
by travel editor, Lauren Briard

Have you ever made a New Year's resolution? Perhaps you have decided to learn a new language, or take up more exercise? You are not alone. In many cultures, people choose to change something about their life at the beginning of the year. And all over the world, people celebrate the new year with interesting customs.

My favourite traditions come from Mexico and other Latin American countries. For example, at midnight on New Year's Eve in many Spanish-speaking cultures, everyone eats twelve grapes – one grape for each month of the year. People say that eating the grapes brings good fortune for the new year. And don't be surprised if your friend from Peru wants to walk around the outside of his or her house with heavy luggage. Traditionally, if you complete this challenge you will be a successful traveller in the new year. Would you like to go on a dream holiday next year? Then try it!

Cleaning the house is perhaps the most common new year tradition. From Mexico to Japan people sweep their homes from top to bottom. Some people believe this removes bad luck and allows good luck to enter the house. In other countries, such as Britain and Iran, the cleaning happens later in the year, so it's called 'spring cleaning'. In Iran, just before the March spring festival, people empty their houses of all their furniture. They clean the house from top to bottom, mend broken furniture or replace old items. People bring flowers and herbs indoors too so their homes smell fresh and clean.

New Year is often celebrated with friends, so my final story is from Denmark. If you are in Denmark at New Year, you will probably see piles of broken plates outside front doors. What's going on? Well, traditionally, people take their old or broken plates and smash them on their friend's front door. It brings good luck to your friend. It's great fun, too! So, a big pile of broken plates means you are a popular person.

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Enjoy the new year festival, wherever you are in the world. I hope you are ready with your grapes, luggage and plates!

Example: New Year is a special day all over the world.

A True ✓ B False ☐ C Doesn't say ☐

1. One of the writer's favourite New Year traditions comes from Latin America. A True ☐ B False ☐ C Doesn't say ☐

2. At midnight, there is a tradition of eating one grape.

A True ☐ B False ☐ C Doesn't say ☐

3. The person who eats the fastest wins a prize.

A True ☐ B False ☐ C Doesn't say ☐

4. In Peru, there is a New Year tradition that includes suitcases.

A True ☐ B False ☐ C Doesn't say ☐

5. The tradition from Peru will give you good dreams in the new year. A True ☐ B False ☐ C Doesn't say ☐

6. House cleaning is a very popular new year tradition.

A True ☐ B False ☐ C Doesn't say ☐

7. In Britain, people clean their homes at New Year.

A True ☐ B False ☐ C Doesn't say ☐

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8 In Iran, the first month of the calendar is March.
A True ☐ B False ☐ C Doesn't say ☐

9 In Denmark, there is a special tradition between friends.
A True ☐ B False ☐ C Doesn't say ☐

10 The most popular people have the most broken plates.
A True ☐ B False ☐ C Doesn't say ☐

2. Match five of the highlighted words / phrases with the definitions.

This is an example: Plants often used to add flavour to food *herbs*

1 activities that have been common for a long time _____

2 something that is difficult to do _____

3 takes something away _____

4 a special day of celebration _____

5 to break into lots of pieces _____

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