The importance of reading

Reading is good **(1)** …………… us. In fact, there is plenty of evidence that reading for pleasure is more than just another leisure pursuit – it actually improves our mental and physical health. Reading extended texts **(2)** …………… as novels or biographies, **(3)** …………… requires intense concentration for a considerable period of time, helps to lengthen attention spans in children and improves their ability to think clearly. However, experts say **(4)** …………… is essential to acquire the habit of reading extensively **(5)** ……………. a small child, while the brain is still developing.

Reading can undoubtedly **(6)** …………… beneficial to our mental well-being. Reading not **(7)** …………… helps combat feelings of loneliness, it also allows people to relax and forget their problems for **(8)** …………… while. The concentration required during the act of reading seems to ease muscle tension and slow the heart rate. Researchers have found that just six minutes of reading can reduce stress levels by as **(9)** ……………. as two-thirds.