Reading

Task 1 Read the text. Complete gaps 1-5 with fragments A-F. There is one extra fragment.

THE FUTURE OF TELEVISION

Television has changed a lot since the days when there were only two or three channels to choose from. People were happy with that because there was nothing else but, with the introduction of videos and later, the Internet, television needed to offer something better. **(1)** _____ Whilst people were excited to begin with, they soon came to be disappointed. That's because many of the programmes were poorly made which meant that more time was spent changing channels trying to find something interesting to watch than actually watching it.

So, what does the future hold for television? Firstly, more and more people are now buying smart TVs which are linked to the Internet. **(2)** _____ One of them is for the television to remember what you have watched and, when you next switch on, it will tell you about programmes that you might be interested in. We will also be able to link our televisions to our friends' televisions and find out what they are watching so we can watch the same. So rather than talk about our favourite TV shows, we'll simply find out from our own televisions!

This idea, though, still assumes that television will work as it does now, with programmes appearing at a certain time each week. **(3)** _____ There are now online television providers who allow you to watch what you like, when you like. You can watch a whole series in one night. This is great for people who hate waiting to find out what is going to happen next. However, parents who are trying to encourage their children to watch less TV may disagree. It will certainly be a challenge for some.

A big advantage of not having specific times for programmes is that no one can complain that 'there's nothing worth watching this evening'. This is a feeling we are all familiar with, and it can be extremely frustrating. **(4)** _____ This is because television companies can show programmes for everyone, from popular series to documentaries that only a handful of people will be interested in. So, there will always be something to watch, whoever you are.

One big problem faced by all television channels is the rise of so many free video channels on the Internet. **(5)** _____ This means that, if the service is too expensive, no one will sign up for it. Of course, if it is too cheap, the company won't be able to afford to buy or make enough programmes. It is, perhaps, a bigger problem for television companies than keeping up with the latest technological advances. One solution is to create very high quality programmes that vloggers and YouTubers can't compete with. I guess, we'll have to wait and see what they come up with.

A This will allow a number of new ideas to be introduced.

B It means that people can subscribe to their favourite channel and all their favourite programmes will be organised in a personal playlist.

C At first, this was done by satellite or cable companies offering hundreds of channels for a monthly fee.

D Many companies offer a catch-up service where you can watch programmes from the previous week that you have missed, but do we need to miss programmes at all?

E Why should people pay to watch television when they can spend their evenings watching almost anything for free?

F Just because some of the programmes aren't for you, it doesn't prevent you from watching what you want.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Task 2 Read the texts and choose the correct answer, A, B, C or D.

A.

HELP OUT AT YOUR LOCAL FOOD BANK

We need volunteers to operate food banks in our area. Traditionally, food banks gave food to the homeless but, in these days of low wages and high prices, even some families with parents in work need them. We are not asking for financial help. The food is provided by supermarkets, charities, schools and other organisations. Local business leaders have helped to finance our centres. What we need from our volunteers is time. We need people to check that the food isn't out of date, pack it in boxes and, most importantly, chat with the people who come into the centres. We will train you to give help and advice to people with serious problems as well as providing addresses and phone numbers of government funded organisations that people can contact if they need emergency financial help for debts or rent.

B.

BE A PART OF YOUR LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Would you like to play a bigger part in helping your community? Why not sign up to join a neighbourhood watch scheme? Being part of a neighbourhood watch scheme in your area makes you feel safer because you know other people are keeping an eye out for any suspicious behaviour and reporting it to the authorities.

If you join up, you will receive emails with reports of burglaries or other problems in your area. These will also give advice on things such as securing your home at night or when you are out and what to ask if people come to your door claiming that they are collecting money for charities.

In addition, we are trying to persuade the government to make funding available for burglar alarms for the less well-off. At the moment this hasn't been offered but we are hoping that the situation might change if more people join a neighbourhood watch scheme and sign our petition.

C.

HELP MAKE 'REHABILITATION IN THE WORKPLACE' A SUCCESS

We are calling on all business people to help us with our new Rehabilitation in the Workplace scheme. The aim is to provide work for people who have recently been released from prison and who are finding it hard to return to life in the community. Despite some opposition from those who think that we should be doing more to help those who haven't committed any crimes, we believe this will bring benefits to everyone.

It can also help you cut costs. This is an official scheme set up by the Prime Minister. Half of the wages and all the employment insurance and taxes of anyone on the scheme will be paid for you. A trial of the scheme has been running for the last six months in the London area and, if you wish, you can read reactions of employers who have taken on employees on our website.

Text A

1 Where does the money to build food banks come from?

A Local businessmen and women.

B Organisations funded by the government.

C Supermarkets, charities and schools.

D Volunteer donations.

2 What do the volunteers have to do to help the scheme?

A Train the people who come to the food banks

B Collect food from supermarkets

C Support people by giving them their time

D Contact government organisations for the people who visit the food banks

Text B

3 Which of these topics will not be included in emails when you join neighbourhood watch?

A Information about crime in your area

B How to get a burglar alarm from the government

C Information on how to keep your house safe when you are asleep or away from home

D What to ask to check the identity of strangers who come to your door

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Text C

4 Why do some people dislike the scheme?

A They don't think the criminals will be able to do the work.

B They don't think the criminals should get any help.

C They are afraid of working with people who have been in prison.

D They think that there are other people who deserve the help more than criminals.

Task 3 Complete gaps 1–5 with sentences A–F. There is one extra sentence.

LEARNING FROM HOW OTHERS LEARN

If we want to give our children the best education possible, it is sensible to look at the most successful education systems in the world for ideas. Different countries have different ideas about how to ensure that their children maximise their potential. It's clear that no education system is perfect. **(1)** ___ So, what, if anything, can we learn from them and are there any similarities between them at all?

The two countries are South Korea and Finland. Korea has a one hundred percent literacy rate. Its students achieve outstanding grades in all kinds of tests compared to those in other countries. How do they do it? **(2)** ___ Many are taught by private tutors after their normal lessons. Despite large class sizes, there are no problems with discipline. Teachers are respected and teach in a traditional manner with the children paying attention and obeying instructions unquestioningly.

Finnish children also do very well in comparison with school students in other countries. However, in Finland, schools combine a short school day and extra after-school activities to develop individual interests and motivate the children. **(3)** ___ There is much less stress in Finnish schools than in Korean schools but that doesn't mean that the teaching is unprofessional. Finnish teachers spend less time teaching but more time in professional development. They are highly educated and teaching is a well- respected and well-paid profession.

So, what can we learn from this brief look at two countries who are able to educate their children more effectively than we can? Firstly, children need a reason to learn. That may be pressure from parents, peers and society as a whole to succeed. **(4)** ___ Too often in our schools, we find children who are uninterested in the lessons and parents who are uninterested in their progress. Politicians and journalists would rather criticise teachers than praise them and, as a result, members of the teaching profession lack the respect they receive in other countries. **(5)** ___ The opposite should be true.

As we can see, Finland and South Korea do share one great similarity. In both societies, people look up to teachers and recognise the importance of the job they are doing. So, let's have more respect for teachers, students and education in general and, maybe, our children can be challenging those from South Korea and Finland in the future.

A Alternatively, it could be an interest in what they are learning and a thirst for even more knowledge.

B These comparisons can hide faults and ignore positive aspects of poorly performing students but, generally, they give us a good idea of which education systems work best.

C The public are more aware of the length of teachers' holidays than the enormous pressure they are under in the classroom.

D However, in most studies, two countries have a higher standard of education than others, even though the way they educate their children seems to be completely different.

E The answer appears to be by sheer hard work. Students are under immense pressure to achieve their goals.

F The idea is that they will work hard because they want to rather than because they are forced to.

LIVEWORKSHEETS