

Read the report below. Six sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences (A – H) to fit each gap (1 – 6).

### Connected but Alone

In this digital age, thanks to smartphones and social media platforms, we are more connected than ever. (1) \_\_\_\_\_ We are always one click away or one swipe away from our friends, family or followers. It seems impossible to disconnect. Yet somehow amid all this connectivity lies a truth, loneliness creeps in despite the apparent closeness we share online.

(2) \_\_\_\_\_ There is no denying that social media enables us to share moments and engage with friends digitally. (3) \_\_\_\_\_ Unfortunately, these interactions often lack the depth found in face-to-face conversations. Simple superficial likes, emoji reactions or comments can never compare to a real time conversation. Therefore, leaving some individuals feeling a sense of emptiness. True social connections involve genuine emotional bonds.

(4) \_\_\_\_\_ As individuals browse through carefully curated posts showcasing only the perfect part of other people's lives, some may start to feel inadequate or excluded. (5) \_\_\_\_\_ Consequently, causing some to suffer mental health issues such as anxiety, depression and low self-esteem.

Moreover, relying too much on digital communication can hurt social skills. (6) \_\_\_\_\_ This created a cycle of isolation where online connections cannot meet their emotional needs.

In conclusion, the paradox of being connected yet feeling isolated is a significant issue today. To overcome loneliness, individuals should focus on building genuine relationships and prioritising meaningful interactions, both online and in real life.

- A Some of us may have abundance of online friends.
- B Furthermore social media frequently promotes comparison.
- C We can't escape from being surrounded by virtual crowd.
- D We need to make a conscious effort in making situation meaningful.
- E We need to reclaim our lives from the addictive clutches of technology.
- F This can lead to a feeling of disconnection and loneliness.
- G Many young people find it hard to have meaningful conversations in person.
- H A key problem is the nature of online interactions.

[6 marks]