

Reading test Focus 3 (the end)

I. Read the text. Match sentences A–F with texts 1–5. There is one extra sentence.

- A A television that gets to know you.
- B A failure to keep up with technology.
- C The importance of price
- D Good for those with minority tastes
- E Watch your favourite programmes anytime
- F Lots of programmes – nothing worth watching

THE FUTURE OF TELEVISION

1 _____

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. At first, this was done by satellite or cable companies offering hundreds of channels for a monthly fee. Unfortunately, many of these were poorly made and often more time was spent changing channels trying to find something interesting to watch than actually watching something.

2 _____

So, what does the future hold for television? Firstly, more and more people are now buying smart TVs which are linked to the Internet. This will allow a number of new ideas to be introduced. One idea 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.

3 _____

This idea, though, still assumes that television will work as it does now, with programmes appearing at a certain time each week. 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? 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.

4 _____

A big advantage of not having specific times for programmes is that no-one can complain that 'there's nothing worth watching this evening'. Just because some of the programmes aren't for you, it doesn't prevent you from watching what you want. This means that 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.

5 _____

One big problem faced by all television channels is the rise of so many free video channels on the Internet. Why should people pay to watch television when they can spend their evenings watching almost anything for free? 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.

_____ /5

II. Read the texts. For sentences 1–4 choose correct text A–C. Two sentences match one of the texts.

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.

1. The scheme has been criticized by some people. _____
2. The scheme requires volunteers to have access to the Internet. _____
3. The scheme receives food from different sources. _____
4. The scheme has only operated in one part of the country so far. _____

_____ /4

III. Complete the article with the sentences below. There are two sentences you don't need.

I love to travel, and I get away from home as often as I can. But when I choose a place to visit, it's usually because I've heard great things about the food, the scenery or the museums. ¹ The purpose of my travels has always been to learn more about the world and to immerse myself in the culture of unfamiliar places.

Until I met Ted, I never imagined that people might travel just to watch a sporting event. I like watching football and basketball, sure, but would I ever travel thousands of miles for no other reason? ² We were to go to Barcelona for a long weekend where there were several football matches scheduled, with great teams playing. Why not give it a try?

Several things impressed me during the weekend. First off, I'd had no idea how many people follow sports. ³ I admit that it seemed inconceivable to me that they wouldn't take advantage of what being in another country has to offer. To my amazement, however, most of them behaved exactly as if they were at home. They showed surprisingly little interest in anything Spanish. When it came to food, most of them chose the so-called 'English' pubs and refused to try anything local. Why travel at all when you can watch the same matches on television at home or with friends at the local pub?

By the time we got to the third match, though, I was beginning to see their point of view. There is an amazing energy at live matches between rival countries that is impossible to find in any other situation. It was definitely a battle between opposing sides. But the sometimes rude behaviour of fans in the UK was absent. Instead, there seemed to be an enjoyment of the skills of the players on both sides that was hard to imagine during a game at home. ⁴ Still, an authentic Spanish meal after the match, and a chance to mix with the Spanish fans, would have improved the experience a lot for me.

- A** It could also be a place I've read about in a novel or biography and have been inspired to visit.
- B** These fans travel from country to country just to support their favourite teams.
- C** I have to admit I was disappointed by the quality of the playing, though. Perhaps the absence of local supporters reduced the players' enthusiasm.
- D** I certainly didn't think so. Out of interest, though, I decided to accept Ted's invitation.
- E** My enjoyment of the matches was spoiled a bit, however, because I kept thinking about all of the sights I could be seeing.
- F** The fact that our teams won two out of three matches was great, of course.

_____ /4

IV. Read the text. For questions 1–5, choose the correct answer, A, B, C or D.

The power of personality

'He has a great personality!' That's how Bill, who later became my husband, was first described to me by my best friend. What she was trying to tell me in those five innocent words was that the man I was about to meet was less than attractive. And it's true, you wouldn't notice him in a crowd. But he really does have a great personality. From the first time we talked I was attracted to him, and after a few short weeks we fell madly in love.

Our idyllic life together was shattered a few years later when I almost lost Bill. In some sense I did lose him. Bill was driving home from work when he lost control of his car and crashed, leading to months in hospital. When he finally regained consciousness, the good-natured, affectionate Bill I used to know had been replaced by a much more self-critical and insecure version.

As a psychology student I'd studied theories on what makes us who we are, whether we are a product of nature or nurture and how far we can choose our identity. I'd even read up on a few cases where

people had suffered catastrophic events and seemingly woken up with whole new personalities. It was only when I witnessed it first-hand that I became fascinated.

The tendency to classify people into personality types goes way back, even as far as the Ancient Greeks. They believed people could be categorised into four main humours, not dissimilar to the more modern Myers-Briggs test which is based on a wider range of sixteen personality types. Another field of thought, professed by Walter Mischel, was that behaviour was much more dependent on the situation a person found themselves in, rather than something present from birth.

It's now generally accepted that there are five main personality types. These are conscientiousness, which is connected to your goals and how sensitive you are towards them. Agreeableness, whether a person is insecure and seeks approval from others or trusts in their own abilities. Extraversion, whether or not you enjoy

socialising. Neuroticism, how you respond to threats, and finally openness, whether you are daring when it comes to new experiences or prefer to keep things the way they are.

Of these five traits, the one that seems easiest to change is neuroticism. Research shows that over time, everyone's personality changes. It just happens so gradually that we don't notice. Since neuroticism is linked to poor health and a reduced lifespan, it's the one that people are most likely to seek help for, usually through therapy. When the right help is given, rather than a gradual change, such as the growth of a plant or the erosion of a cliff, the changes in terms of neuroticism are far easier to identify. Instead of thirty or forty years it can take as little as a month.

With that in mind, Bill and I have been on a mission to help him regain some of the identity he had before his accident. Scientific papers state that one way to change the mechanisms of behaviour is to focus on strengths and resources rather than problems, and finding ways these strengths can help you. Since Bill has always been very athletic, we found ways for him to channel his anger through learning martial arts, which he has gone on to compete in successfully. We still have a long way to go, but there are more and more glimpses of the old Bill showing through, and I have no doubt that this will continue as we keep working together.

- 1 The writer's friend focussed on Bill's personality because
 - A she didn't know what he looked like.
 - B she believed it was his most attractive quality.
 - C he had a similar personality to the writer.
 - D it was the easiest way to identify him in a crowd.
- 2 The writer became really interested in theories about personality when
 - A she was studying psychology.
 - B she read cases about people whose personalities had changed.
 - C she noticed changes in Bill.
 - D she started working as a psychologist.
- 3 Walter Mischel suggested that
 - A behaviour is fixed from birth.
 - B there are sixteen different personality types.
 - C people have the power to change their situations.
 - D the way people behave is deeply affected by the circumstances around them.
- 4 Research shows that
 - A it's impossible to notice changes in your own personality.
 - B it takes up to forty years for personality to change.
 - C neuroticism is the trait that people most commonly want to work on.
 - D poor health is linked to having therapy for personality disorders.
- 5 Bill is now
 - A slowly returning to his only self.
 - B as confident as he was before the accident.
 - C focussing on his problems.
 - D returning to his hobby of martial arts.