Reading

Reading Passage 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 1-13**, which are based on Reading Passage 1.

Questions 1-6

Reading Passage 1 has 7 paragraphs **A-G**

Choose the correct heading for Paragraphs **A-G** from the list of headings below.

Write the correct number **(i-ix)** in boxes **1-6** on your answer sheet.

List of headings	
i.	The thin line between perfectionism and having high standards
ii.	The role of parenting.
iii.	Using therapies to combat perfectionism
iv.	Pros and cons of perfectionism.
v.	How to distinguishes perfectionism and other kinds of mental problems.
vi.	Different measures to cope with perfectionism
vii.	A method to detect a perfectionist
viii.	Health issues from being a perfectionist
ix.	Perfectionism may vary.

Example: Paragraph A. iv

1. Paragraph B
2. Paragraph C
3. Paragraph D
4. Paragraph E
5. Paragraph F
6. Paragraph G

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A. Perfectionism has increased significantly over the past three decades, a recent analysis shows. Young people in particular place higher demands on themselves and on others. Often, having high standards can drive success, but for some people, diligence and motivation can shift into perfectionism, a sorely misunderstood personality trait that can have dangerous consequences. Our dog-eat-dog world, full of impeccable images of what our bodies, careers and aspirations should look like, is creating a rising tide of millennials who may be putting themselves at risk of mental and physical illness in their search for the perfect life.

B. "Perfection is hard to define," says Thomas Curran at the University of Bath, UK, who has been studying its rise. There is no fixed way of diagnosing it. However, many studies measure it using the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS), which was developed three decades ago. It consists of 45 statements – such as "I strive to be the best at everything I do", "If I ask someone to do something, I expect it to be done flawlessly" and "People expect nothing less than perfection from me" – and people rate how much they agree with each of these on a scale of 1 to 7. If you very much identify with these kinds of statements, it is likely that you have perfectionist tendencies.

C. The scale also distinguishes between three different kinds of perfectionism. "Self-oriented" perfectionists set themselves high goals in their work and relationships. They can often experience anxiety from losing to a competitor, failing at a test or not getting a bonus at work. "Other-oriented" perfectionists hold those around them to exceptionally high standards. They are very critical and judgemental of others and risk social rejection and relationship problems. Finally, there are "socially prescribed" perfectionists, who feel immense pressure from others to be perfect, while also seeking their approval. "The impossibly high standards they set for themselves mean they often feel rejected or harshly scrutinised," says Curran. "As a consequence, their self-esteem takes a hit on a daily basis. It's a real battle involving lots of negative emotions, guilt and shame."

D. Part of the difficulty in pinpointing perfectionism is that the line between having high standards and being a perfectionist is very blurred. "The difference between someone who sets high goals and a perfectionist comes at the time of success or failure," says Andrew Hill at York St John University, UK. For instance, someone who is hard-working and

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diligent will appreciate any success, and will adapt their goals when they fail. They will be able to put in just enough effort for a strategic benefit. A perfectionist will take much less pleasure from success. Even a perfect score will be met with a sense of pressure that they need to keep up this level of success or that the goalposts need to be placed further away.

E. Perfectionism has strong links with health conditions. When Karina Limburg at Ludwig-Maximilians University in Munich, Germany, and her colleagues analysed 284 studies, which included more than 57,000 participants, they found that people with eating disorders, anxiety disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and depression had higher levels of perfectionism compared with people who didn't have any of the conditions. Those with perfectionist tendencies were more likely to experience more than one condition at a time. Perfectionism has also been linked with suicide. Physical health may also be affected as a result of the stress that perfectionists subject themselves to, leading to an increased risk of things like cardiovascular disease. Additionally, they cope less well when they are ill because they experience higher levels of anger, depression and anxiety.

F. Fortunately, there are ways we can combat perfectionism. But first we need to recognise it, which can be difficult. By the very nature of this condition, it is extremely hard for a perfectionist to admit that there might be something wrong, says Simon Sherry at Dalhousie University in Canada, who specialises in treating perfectionism. Acknowledging the problem is an excellent first step. "We usually see people at the end of the road, when they are in a bad way," he says. Depending on the extent of the problem, some people find that self-help books are enough. Others need professional help. This normally comes in the form of talking therapies or cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), which give people tools to analyse why they are acting in certain ways and enable them to break out of negative patterns.

G. With perfectionism rising rapidly among young people, many parents will share Marshall-Maun's desire to protect their children. "We've been working on the role parents play and it's complex," says Smith. "In terms of preventing it in your children, we know that parental practices have an important influence." Extremely critical or demanding parents risk triggering perfectionism in their kids. "To avoid creating perfectionist tendencies, parents need to focus on loving their children in a more unconditional way, rather than focusing their love on specific successes," says Sherry. They can also help young people

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cope with the pressures of modern life. “It’s incumbent on parents to coach their children on the potential hazards of social media. Teach them that it doesn’t offer realistic images of lives, that they are often lofty and fake,” he says.

Questions 7-13

Complete the summary below. Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes **7-13** on your answer sheet.

Perfectionism can drive people to success but at the same time can put them under the risk of **7**..... There is a lot of methods to diagnose perfectionism, however **8**..... is frequently used. This method also helps to **9**..... between “Self-oriented”, “Other-oriented” and “Socially prescribed”.

Also, it is really hard to differentiate perfectionism and having high standards as their border is **10** ..... According to an expert, a person with high standards with experience more **11**..... from success than a perfectionist.

Perfectionism has a close relationship with health issues. An analysis from 284 researches shows that perfectionists are more likely to suffer from different types of disorders and **12**..... as well as think about suicide. Regarding physical health, due to **13**....., perfectionists are more prone to cardiovascular disease and less resilient when they are sick.

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