Reading passage 1

Is overtourism pricing locals out?

If you have ever tried to enjoy a picturesque old town, only to find it full of souvenir shops, short-term rentals, and restaurants with menus in five languages, you have most likely experienced overtourism. If you have ever seen graffiti reading 'Tourists go home', you have definitely seen how serious the issue has become. In recent years, travelling has become easier than ever. Rarely have so many people travelled so often, and as more flats are turned into holiday rentals, prices go up, making it harder and harder for locals to live in the city centre. 'Where are all the Amsterdamers?' I asked an underground worker during a visit to Amsterdam, a city I had lived in 20 years earlier as an exchange student, but which I now barely recognised. 'We can't afford to live here anymore,' he replied.

This problem is no longer limited to one or two famous destinations like Barcelona or Amsterdam. It has become a global issue that affects many of the world's most popular cities. Locals often say their neighbourhoods no longer feel like home, and in many cases, they are no longer home at all. Small local shops disappear, replaced by souvenir stores, fast-food chains, and holiday rentals. Ironically, people travel to experience the local atmosphere of places where the only people around are other tourists. The more popular a city becomes, the farther residents are forced to move from the centre. Authenticity and community life are replaced by soulless theme-park areas designed for visitors.

Not surprisingly, many locals have started to push back. In several popular destinations, protests against overtourism are now hard to miss. Demonstrators carry signs telling tourists to go home; they tell visitors in cafés and on beaches — or rather yell at them — to leave; balconies display banners against short-term rentals; and graffiti has appeared on walls blaming tourists for rising prices. Local governments say tourism brings jobs and money. Still, residents argue that authorities could have limited the impact of tourism and might have avoided much of the anger if they had acted earlier. Instead, in many cities, tourism was allowed to grow without limits, and by the time officials reacted, the damage had already been done. Now the debate is everywhere: how do you protect the local community without killing the industry that keeps the city alive?

Some cities have already started to act. Venice has introduced entry fees for day visitors, Barcelona has raised tourist taxes and plans to remove tourist apartment licences, Amsterdam has limited short-term rentals, and other destinations have introduced tourist taxes or visitor limits. These measures are a step in the right direction, but they rarely give locals a ticket back to the neighbourhoods they have already been forced to leave. The hope is that those who remain will not be the next to go.

1. According to the author, graffiti against tourism is...

   A. not a pleasant view to experience.

   B. an unmistakable sign of overtourism.

   C. a serious offence.

   D. unavoidable nowadays in tourist areas.

2. Why does the author include the Amsterdam anecdote?

   A. To compare current prices with those 20 years ago.

   B. To share an interesting personal experience.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

C. To provide evidence of how tourism is changing cities.

D. To suggest that Amsterdam is a popular destination.

3. According to paragraph 2, which of the following is NOT true?

A. Residents miss the sense of community.

B. They move out because they no longer like living there.

C. They are priced out of their neighbourhoods.

D. Tourists can't have an authentic experience.

4. What is the main idea of this paragraph?

A. Overtourism is a worldwide issue.

B. It is not a good idea to visit touristy cities.

C. Popular cities are losing their identity.

D. Residents can no longer afford to live in city centres.

5. What title would best represent the main idea in paragraph 3?

A. Growing protests

B. Tourists are to blame

C. Banning tourism is the only way

D. Too little too late

6. According to paragraph 3, we can infer that tourism is...

A. avoidable

B. beneficial

C. unstoppable

D. necessary

7. According to paragraph 5, the measures taken so far are bound to fix the problem.

A. True

B. False

C. Not mentioned

Reading passage 2

Am I in a toxic relationship?

A toxic relationship is one that undermines your well-being—emotionally, psychologically, and sometimes even physically. These relationships can exist in various contexts, from friendships to romantic partnerships, and even within families. It is characterised by behaviours that leave you feeling unsupported, misunderstood, demeaned, or attacked. Basically, it is an interrelationship where the bad consistently outweighs the good, and your overall welfare is threatened. Identifying toxic dynamics early is crucial. The longer you stay in such a relationship, the more it can impact your mental and emotional health.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Recognizing toxicity allows you to take steps to protect yourself and seek healthier connections. Physical or verbal abuse is a clear sign of toxicity, but psychological abuse is not as obvious. Alongside persistent criticism and attempts to isolate you from loved ones, constantly being blamed and made to feel guilty about your or somebody else's actions are behaviours to watch out for. According to many, however, what makes toxicity apparent in a relationship are frequent situations of consistent disrespect, where you don't feel appreciated or are even insulted.

Toxic relationships can have far-reaching consequences on the victim's well-being on a mental and physical level. Living in these emotionally unhealthy conditions leads to a steady decrease in self-worth and self-esteem. Lacking energy after interactions and experiencing depression, anger, or tiredness are only some of the negative effects that such relationships can have on an individual. Physically, the stress and anxiety stemming from toxic dynamics can lead to a range of health issues, including digestive issues, weakened immune function, and sleep disturbances.

The list of toxic behaviours is long, but the most damaging patterns in a relationship can be categorised depending on the type of effect these behaviours can have on others. One of these categories is 'behavioural
control', which includes strategies employed by individuals to influence and dominate others to achieve personal gain. This can be obtained either through controlling and forceful measures, such as aggressive behaviours, or through subtly shaping the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours of others by lying or bending the truth. This is a form of manipulation – known as gaslighting – in which facts are changed or withheld to suit the toxic person's interest, causing you to question your own senses and thoughts.

Another category of toxic behaviours is 'emotional impact', which is determined by how individuals experience and react to emotional signals, whether they be positive or negative. It refers to the effects of emotional experiences on thoughts, feelings, and behaviour, which can range from positive emotions like happiness to negative ones like sadness or fear. This category is relevant especially for those who deal with past traumas or insecurities. These individuals are considered vulnerable as they may struggle to set limits, express needs, or protect themselves from harm, making them more prone to exploitation by others. Identifying and dealing with your weaknesses is a good starting point to build up your ability to bounce back emotionally.

In today's interconnected world, it's essential to recognise that toxic behaviour isn't limited to face-to-face interactions but can occur through digital mediums, affecting mental and emotional health just as profoundly. In the virtual world, where cyberbullying, online harassment, and forceful control through technology are some of the toxic tactics that thrive on popular digital communication platforms, establishing personal space and addressing red flags as they occur might not be enough to protect yourself against all forms of toxicity. Being mindful of online content, verifying information before accepting it as truth, and curating online spaces to prioritise positivity and healthy interactions can help limit exposure to toxic content.

1. The writer describes a toxic relationship as...

   A. a long-term relationship where the people involved feel unappreciated.

   B. a connection which is constantly dominated by negative experiences.

   C. a romantic bond in which each party feels threatened by the other.

   D. a family that lacks support and understanding between members.

2. According to the writer, one of the most obvious signs of psychological abuse is...

   A. a constant feeling of loneliness and isolation.

   B. an intense fear of being physically harmed.

   C. repeated occurrences that show lack of respect and appreciation.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

D. continuous unjust accusations of being at fault in any situation.

3. Which mental effects of a toxic relationship does the writer mention?

A. The inability to have a good night's sleep.

B. The gradual loss of confidence in oneself.

C. The lack of financial independence.

D. The need to avoid emotional connections.

4. What is the purpose of **'gaslighting'**?

A. To influence an individual by making them doubt their own perceptions.

B. To control someone's behavior by using threats.

C. To dominate a relationship by reacting in an aggressive manner.

D. To manipulate people's thoughts and feelings by making them feel guilty.

5. What is the first thing you should do to develop emotional resilience?

A. Recognising and working on the areas that make you vulnerable.

B. Becoming more determined about getting what they need and want.

C. Identifying what behaviors cause unwanted or unhappy emotions.

D. Keeping yourself safe with the help of family and friends.

6. What does the writer imply about the issue of toxic interactions online?

A. Despite their efforts, digital platforms are unable to deal with it effectively.

B. Introducing boundaries as protection against it is as effective as in the real world.

C. Relevant mindful content is more accessible and widespread nowadays.

D. Their impact on the victim's well-being is equal to that in real-life relationships.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

READING PASSAGE 1

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

The Great Fire of London

Paragraph A

The Great Fire of London swept through London in September 1666, devastating many buildings, including 13,200 houses and 87 parish churches. The Royal Exchange, the Guildhall and St. Paul's Cathedral, all built during the Middle Ages, were also all totally destroyed. Although the verified death toll was only six people, it is unknown how many people died in the Great Fire of London, because many more died through indirect causes. The financial losses caused by the fire were estimated to be £10 million, at a time when London's annual income was only £12,000. Many people were financially ruined and debtors' prisons became over-crowded.

Paragraph B

The Great Fire of London started on Sunday, 2 September 1666 in a baker's shop in Pudding Lane, belonging to Thomas Farynor. Although he claimed to have extinguished the fire, three hours later, at 1 a.m., his house was a blazing inferno. It is not certain how the fire actually began, but it is likely that it may have been caused by a spark from Farynor's oven falling onto a pile of fuel nearby. In 1979, archaeologists excavated the remains of a burnt out shop on Pudding Lane that was very close to the bakery where the fire started. In the cellar, they found the charred remnants of 20 barrels of pitch. Pitch burns very easily and would have helped to spread the fire.

Paragraph C

The fire spread quickly down Pudding Lane and carried on down Fish Hill and towards the Thames. The fire continued to spread rapidly, helped by a strong wind from the east. When it reached the Thames, it hit warehouses that were stocked with combustible products, such as oil and rope. Fortunately, the fire could not spread south of the river, because a previous blaze in 1633 had already wrecked a section of London Bridge. As the fire was spreading so quickly, most Londoners concentrated on escaping rather than fighting the fire.

Paragraph D

In the 17th century, people were not as aware of the dangers of fire as they are today. Buildings were made of timber covered in pitch and tightly packed together. The design of buildings meant flames could easily spread from building to building. Following a long, dry summer, the city was suffering a drought; water was scarce and the wooden houses had dried out, making them easier to burn.

Paragraph E

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Samuel Pepys, a diarist of the period and Clerk to the Royal Navy, observed the fire and recommended to the King that buildings should be pulled down, as it could be the only way to stop the fire. The Mayor made the order to pull down burning houses using fire hooks, but the fire continued to spread. Pepys then spoke to the Admiral of the Navy and they agreed that they should blow up houses in the path of the fire. The hope was that by doing this, they would create a space to stop the fire spreading from house to house. The Navy carried out the request and by the next morning, the fire has been successfully stopped.

Paragraph F

London had to be almost totally reconstructed and many people went to the fields outside London. They stayed there for many days, sheltering in tents and shacks and some people were forced to live in this way for months and even years. Throughout 1667, people cleared rubble and surveyed the burnt area. Much time was spent planning new street layouts and drawing up new building regulations. Public buildings were paid for with money from a new coal tax, but by the end of the year only 150 new houses had been built. The new regulations were designed to prevent such a disaster happening again. Houses now had to be faced in brick instead of wood. Some streets were widened and two new streets were created. Pavements and new sewers were laid, and London's quaysides were improved. Initially, however, only temporary buildings were erected that were ill-equipped, and this enabled the plague, which was common in London at that time, to spread easily. Many people died from this and the harsh winter that followed the fire.

Paragraph G

In 1666, there was no organised fire brigade. Fire fighting was very basic with little skill or knowledge involved. Leather buckets, axes and water squirts were used to fight the fire, but they had little effect. As a result of the Great Fire of London, early fire brigades were formed by insurance companies. Building insurance was very profitable and many more insurance companies were set up, establishing their own fire brigades. These brigades were sent to insured properties if a fire occurred to minimise damage and cost. Firemarks were used to identify – and advertise – different insurance companies. They were placed on the outside of an insured building and brigades would use them to determine whether a building was insured by them. If a building was on fire, several brigades would attend. If they did not see their specific firemark attached to the building, they would leave the property to burn. Some old firemarks can still be seen on London buildings today. Also, fire fighters wore brightly coloured uniforms to distinguish themselves from rival insurance brigades. Although this was a step in the right direction, fire fighters received little training and the equipment used remained very basic.

Questions 1-7

LIVEWORKSHEETS

The text on the previous pages has 7 paragraphs (**A – G**).
Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list of headings below.
*Write the correct number (**i – x**) in boxes **1-7** on your answer sheet.*

i Vulnerable Buildings
ii The Effect on Trade
iii How it Started
iv A Positive from the Ashes
v Food Shortages
vi The Movement of the Fire
vii The Effects of the Smoke
viii Extinguishing the Fire
ix The Costs
x A New London

1 Paragraph **A**
2 Paragraph **B**
3 Paragraph **C**
4 Paragraph **D**
5 Paragraph **E**
6 Paragraph **F**
7 Paragraph **G**

Questions 8-11

*Choose **FOUR** letters, **A-G**.*
What **FOUR** of the following were effects of the Great Fire of London?
*Write the correct letter, **A-G**, in any order in boxes **8-11** on your answer sheet.*

A Officially, only six people died.
B The French economy benefitted from the destruction of businesses in London.
C Some people had to live rough in fields for years following the fire.
D The English royal family were forced to live outside London for 18 months.
E Disease spread more easily.
F An enquiry was completed by the government into why the damage was so bad.
G Fire fighting services were launched.

Questions 12 and 13

Complete the sentences below.
Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the text for each answer.
*Write your answers in boxes **12** and **13** on your answer sheet.*

12 One measure to prevent further fires was to ensure that London houses would have ..... facades in the future.

13 People could differentiate the fire brigades from different insurance companies by their .....

LIVEWORKSHEETS

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 27-40** which are based on Reading Passage 3 below.

The Psychology of Wealth

What stops people from succeeding financially and having on-going prosperity in their life? The answer is generally focused around the belief that financial success is not a possibility. There are many people who have unconscious barriers that prevent them from having the wealth and abundance that they deserve.

At a conscious level, most people think they are doing everything possible to achieve their goals. However, there still might be some unwitting part of them that does not believe they can obtain success. The more that unconscious part is avoided, the more a person will be blocked in their everyday life. Another problem is that, instead of focusing on all the possible ways to get rich, many people have an obsession about what they do not have. An interesting pattern develops in which they can become angry or resentful over their situation and this in turn can limit these people in their lives more and more. Individuals would find it so much easier to get ahead in life with a peaceful state of mind, rather than an angry or resentful one.

A first step in understanding the unconscious patterning of a person's financial situation is to explore the deeper nature of how they represent money. For example, a person with money issues may have had parents who lived in poverty, and they subsequently formed a 'Depression Era' mentality. An unconscious belief can develop that he or she will always have to struggle financially, because that is what their parents did. Alternatively, the person might have had a parent tell them over and over again that they will never be successful, and eventually they begin to believe it.

It is very common for children to unconsciously form limiting beliefs around money at an early age. In the field of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP), these types of limiting beliefs are referred to as 'imprints.' An imprint is basically a memory that is formed at an early age, and can serve as a root for both the limiting and empowering beliefs that people form as children. Some of the beliefs that people may develop at early ages are not always healthy, and are created as a result of a traumatic or confusing experience that they have forgotten. How we unconsciously and consciously view the world in terms of money is often based on such beliefs.

A primary and fundamental psychological difference between those who do well financially and those who do not revolves around beliefs. For example, many people do not even view financial success as an option. They do not have the capability to open themselves up to all of the possibilities that are available for achieving prosperity and they will nearly always get stuck in a monthly routine, so

LIVEWORKSHEETS

that they are unwilling to take risks or try something different, because they are afraid that they will end up being even worse off than before.
Another issue can be that people become over-absorbed with the idea of making money and this can be extremely unhealthy. Money does not determine who you are; it's simply a resource. There is a term called 'affluenza,' which has been defined as "a painful, contagious, socially transmitted condition of overload, debt, anxiety and waste resulting from the dogged pursuit of more." Affluenza is an unsustainable and seriously unhealthy addiction to personal and societal economic growth. It is most acute in those who inherit wealth and seem to have no purpose or direction. For those with wealth or for those who desire it more than anything, abandoning the urge for more can often be the key to being more successful, and certainly happier. Once people stop equating their self-worth with money, then the doors of possibility can swing open for them, because they are willing to try more things. Once they start feeling better about themselves, they become less fearful and can be open to trying something completely different.
So, can money make people happy? Research shows that it does up to a point, after which there are diminishing returns, so that the extremely wealthy are no happier than the comfortably well off. Rich nations are generally happier than poor ones, but the relationship is far from consistent; other factors like political stability, freedom and security also play a part. Research likewise shows that the money-happiness connection seems to be stronger for people paid hourly than those on a salary. This is presumably because salaried people can more easily compensate with career satisfaction. Money can also impair the ability to enjoy the simple things in life, which rather offsets the happiness that wealth brings.
Money can also impair people's satisfaction in their play and humanitarian works. When someone has done something out of the goodness of their heart, they can be insulted by offers of payment. Cognitive dissonance experiments show that paying people derisory amounts of money for their work results in them enjoying it less and doing it less well than if they had no pay at all. The capacity for monetary reward to undermine a person's intrinsic pleasure in work performance has been demonstrated neurologically.
In conclusion, people need to realise that their own attitudes to wealth can affect their chances of acquiring both money and happiness. As a person begins to embrace self worth and open himself or herself up to the idea of what is possible, he or she will attract wealth and prosperity into their life. The outer world is truly a reflection of people's inner worlds. If someone feels good inside, generally it will show on the outside and they will draw positive experiences into their life.

Questions 27-29

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Complete the notes below.
Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** for each answer.
*Write your answers in boxes **27-29** on your answer sheet.*

Some people unwittingly reject the prospect of becoming rich; these **27**..... stop them from financial success.
Most people believe they do the best they can, but sometimes they don't really believe in their potential.
If people do not face up to this lack of self-belief, they'll encounter more and more obstacles.
People can also have an **28**..... about their lack of possessions.
Anger is a result, which hinders their progress as well.
People whose parents were poor may feel they will also be poor.
A **29**..... who is always negative about a child's prospects may also be eventually believed.

Questions 30-34

Do the following statements agree with the views of the writer of the text?
*In boxes **30-34** on your answer sheet write:*

YES if the statement agrees with the writer's views
NO if the statement doesn't agree with the writer's views
NOT GIVEN if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this

30 A person can develop unhelpful imprints about money when a child.
31 Although important, belief is not a key part of whether someone can become financially successful.
32 Those people stuck in a monthly routine are the most likely to try something different.
33 The problem of 'affluenza' has been in the media a lot recently.
34 'Affluenza' is more common in people who have not had to work for their money.

Questions 35-40

Complete the summary below.
Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the text for each answer.
*Write your answers in boxes **35-40** on your answer sheet.*

Money and Happiness

35..... mean people are not happier with wealth beyond a certain amount. Rich countries are happier than poor ones, but this is simplistic, due to other relevant **36**..... Salaried workers have been shown to be happier than wage-paid workers, maybe due to **37**..... Rich people also sometimes do not enjoy life's **38**.....

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Money can also relate to how people approach doing things and **39**..... have proved this. The complex relationship between a **40**..... and enjoyment of work has also been proved.
Changing their attitudes to wealth can make some people happier and allow them to acquire money more easily.

LIVEWORKSHEETS