



READING COMPREHENSION

A) Read the article. Choose from the paragraphs (A–G) the one which fits each gap (11–16). There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use.

Good Luck! 

Scientists have discovered how to ‘delete’ unwanted memories

Are there any memories you’d like to permanently remove from your head?

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It sounds like the stuff of science fiction, but according to a new documentary that premiered in the US recently, scientists have discovered how to do just that – and more.

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“For much of human history, memory has been seen as a tape recorder that faithfully registers information and replays it intact,” say the film’s makers.

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Among the documentary’s subjects is Jake Hausler, a 12-year-old boy from St. Louis who can remember just about every single thing he has experienced since the age of eight.

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“Forgetting is probably one of the most important things that brains will do,” says André Fenton, a prominent neuroscientist who is currently working on a technique to erase painful memories. “We understand only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to human memory.”

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The question she researched wasn’t about the potential for memory being false – no doubt about that – but how false it can be.

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The film tells us about very interesting discoveries, and raises questions about the real-world implications of manipulating memories. More information can be found on the channel’s website.

A “But now, researchers are discovering that memory is far more fluid, always being written and rewritten, not just by us but by others. We are discovering the precise mechanisms that can explain and even control our memories.”

B Or what if you could alter unpleasant memories so they’re no longer upsetting? Or create entirely new memories of events that never occurred?

C The film’s makers also speak to clinical psychologist Merel Kindt, who has discovered that medication can be used to remove the negative associations of some memories – through which she has managed to ‘cure’ patients of arachnophobia.

D The method these researchers used to achieve this consisted of a combination of small electric shocks and some medication. Although these were reported to be harmless, their use to target and erase memories raised some serious questions.

E Other interviewees include Julia Shaw, psychology professor at London South Bank University, who has designed a system for implanting false memories, and has successfully convinced subjects they've committed crimes that never took place - research that has potentially troubling ramifications for the criminal justice system.

F "Memory Hackers," from PBS's NOVA documentary strand, looks at cutting edge research into the nature of memory, and how it might be manipulated for mankind's benefit.

G Jake is the youngest ever person to be diagnosed with Highly Superior Autobiographical Memory, meaning he can remember practically everything that ever happened to him in his life. which makes it difficult for him to distinguish between trivial and important events from his past.

WRITING

B) Complete the text with the correct form of the verbs in in brackets. Sometimes more than one answer is possible.

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

Today, I went to the village where I (1) _____ (grow up) as a child. I got really excited when I saw the sign that (2) _____ (say) 'Midsummer 6 miles'. Soon I (3) _____ (pass) the leisure centre where my mother took me swimming at weekends. All my childhood memories came flooding back- everything from building sand castles on the beach to my first day at school - and then suddenly they (4) _____ (pull away).

I saw a cyclist who (5) _____ (probably/go) to the leisure centre. I could see his tennis bag which he (6) _____ (firmly, tie down) to his bike.

I (7) _____ (come) to see Mrs. Perry, my piano teacher. I always called her Mrs. Perry because that was the way my parents (8) _____ (bring me up); in those days we (9) _____ (never/call) our elders by their first name.

When she answered the door it took her a minute before she recognised me. Once inside we had a lot to catch up on - everything that (10) _____ (go on) over the years. I told her how I (11) _____ (give up) having piano lessons because I (12) _____ (really/stop) making progress. When I left I (13) _____ (promise) that I (14) _____ (come back).

I will go back some day and take my children with me to show them round the village where I (15) _____ (live) as a child.

C) Complete the collocations in the sentences.

1- Having a _____ memory helps me to forget the negative and focus on the positive. That's how I prefer it.

2- Talking to another person involved in the same event helps _____ your memory of the finer details; things you had completely forgotten about.

3- It's amazing how actors can remember hundreds of lines _____.

4- In this course we show you how much you can do to _____ facts and figures to memory, ready to recall them later in exams.

5- It is amazing what can _____ a memory. It could be something as simple or as powerful as a smell.