Read the following text about gardening, and answer the 15 questions.

AMATEUR GARDENING IN THE UK

Paragraph 1
Around half of all adults in the UK list gardening as one of their pastimes and over 90% of UK homes have a garden of some sort. Not surprisingly, the level of participation generally rises the older people get. Fewer than one in five people aged 16 to 24 claim to do any gardening, for example. But this is hardly surprising since the average age at which people can afford to buy their first home is nearly 40 – you are unlikely to start gardening until you own one, after all.

Paragraph 2
First-time gardeners may be getting slightly older, but there is no doubt the pastime's popularity is on the rise again. The comeback of gardening may have more to do with the present economic situation than with gardening becoming "trendy", though. For instance, the percentage of home-grown fruit and vegetables eaten in the UK has been rising for a number of years. It is no coincidence that at the same time income levels have been falling. Growing more of our own food makes financial sense.

Paragraph 3
That said, why people are returning to their gardens hardly matters; the important fact is that they are. Gardeners enjoy increased levels of physical activity and a reduced risk of obesity and other weight-related health problems as a result. Research has also shown that gardening helps people decrease and manage their levels of stress, so not only is it good for our physical well-being, but gardening also helps our mental wellness. Indeed, there is growing evidence that it can even reduce the symptoms of dementia and other illnesses in the elderly.

Paragraph 4
However, there are some downsides to gardening's renewed popularity. For example, amateur gardeners are the largest consumers of peat* in the UK, but already 94% of the country's natural peat bogs**, which are home to many precious plants and animals, have been destroyed. Peat regrows at a rate of 1mm per year, meaning the damage cannot be reversed. And while many of the UK's remaining areas of peat bog are now protected, we continue to import peat products from other countries, such as the Republic of Ireland and Finland.

Paragraph 5
The good news is we can solve the problem. Gardening enthusiasts just need to educate themselves about the alternatives on offer. The most obvious of these is peat-free compost. Over the years, such products have improved dramatically and are now arguably just as good for the plants in our gardens as peat itself. Another practical and money-saving solution is to make your own compost. It is estimated that around 30% of all household waste can be turned into compost. This includes some things you might not expect, such as paper, cardboard and natural clothing. With a few simple steps, therefore, we can make gardening good not just for us, but also for the environment.

* **peat**: soft brown substance formed from decaying plants under the surface of the ground, found in cool wet areas.

** **peat bogs**: wet soft ground, formed of decaying plants.

Source: *Preparing for Trinity ISE II*

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Questions 1-5

The text has five paragraphs (1-5). Choose the best title for each paragraph from A-F below and write the letter (A-F) on the lines below. There is one title that you don't need.

1. Paragraph 1 ☐

2. Paragraph 2 ☐

3. Paragraph 3 ☐

4. Paragraph 4 ☐

5. Paragraph 5 ☐

A	Environmental impacts of gardening that should concern us
B	How age and property factors influence gardener numbers
C	How practical money reasons contribute to gardening's popularity
D	How you can make your gardening more eco-friendly
E	How gardening can help the body and the mind
F	How gardening is damaging most of Britain's peat bogs today

Questions 6-10

Choose the five statements from A-H below that are TRUE according to the information given in the text. Write the letters of the TRUE statements on the squares below (in alphabetical order).

6. ☐

7. ☐

8. ☐

9. ☐

10. ☐

A	Gardening is the most popular hobby for around half of UK adults.
B	Gardening could help improve life for older people with certain mental illnesses.
C	More people are growing their own fruit and vegetables now than for some years.
D	Peat-free compost did not use to be as high in quality as it is today.
E	UK gardening habits contribute to damaging the environment of other countries.
F	Around 30% of household waste is recycled as compost.
G	Peat-free compost sold in shops is less expensive than peat compost.
H	In general, adults above the age of 24 are more likely to work in the garden than adults under 24.

Questions 11-15

Complete sentences 11-15 with a word, phrase or number from the text (maximum three words). Write the word, phrase or number in the space provided.

11. People typically cannot purchase a home of their own until they are _____.

12. The writer suggests gardening's popularity is partly due to people having less _____.

13. Research suggests that people who garden can better control their _____.

14. The vast majority of the UK's _____ no longer exist.

15. Almost one third of all _____ can be made into compost.

LIVEWORKSHEETS