

Task 2

Read the text below. For questions (6–10) choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D). Write your answers on the separate answer sheet.

Multi-tasking

“If you want something done, ask a busy person to do it,” goes the saying. Being perpetually busy – a type A personality who can check e-mail, fold laundry, send a text message, and cook dinner, all at once – is a state that modern technology supports and that society encourages as something of a status symbol. In fact, the opposite may be true: multitasking causes the brain to make more mistakes. According to a study in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, doing two or more things at once is a recipe for inefficiency; plus, the more you multitask, the worse you are at it.

In the study, Stanford University researchers compared university students who did a lot of multitasking – constantly switching between different media and messages, such as reading e-mail while also writing essays, surfing the Internet, and watching TV – with *those* who did very little. The two groups were given tests which assessed them on memory, the ability to focus, and how easily they moved from one task to another. In all three tests, the students who did the most multitasking had the worst results, in terms of being easily distracted, being unable to organise facts in their short-term memory. What’s more, the researchers suggest multitasking may lead to a type of self-perpetuating behaviour, where a person has difficulty differentiating the worthwhile from the pointless, and compulsively seeks more information – more Tweets, more text messages, more news feeds.

To quote researcher Eval Ophir, “High multitaskers can’t keep things separate in their minds. They just love more and more information, their greatest thrill is to get more.” If this description of multitasking has hit a little too close to home, take steps to reduce your media exposure – when you’re working on your laptop, turn off your phone and close your e-mail. Use a kitchen timer to spend 45 minutes on a particular task, with no distractions – you will be surprised at how much you achieve. Same goes for watching a TV program with your family or having an uninterrupted conversation. If you are struggling, ground yourself with a few minutes of deep breathing or a walk, and then redirect your mind to the designated activity.

- 6 According to paragraph 1, multi-tasking allows people _____.
- A to succeed in more chores
 - B to improve their image
 - C to avoid many errors
 - D to develop their brain
- 7 What does the word “*those*” in paragraph 2 refer to?
- A students
 - B researchers
 - C messages
 - D essays
- 8 Which of the following abilities was **NOT** the subject of Stanford University study?
- A switching between tasks
 - B remembering things
 - C concentrating on work
 - D doing written exercises
- 9 What happens to people when they multi-task?
- A They become tired very soon.
 - B They feel proud of themselves.
 - C They ignore their families.
 - D They go for additional facts.
- 10 What does the author say about multitaskers?
- A They are good at using several gadgets at the same time.
 - B They know how to relax while working on the computer.
 - C They experience difficulties in separating their assignments.
 - D They are experts in finding the necessary information fast.