



Name: _____

Quiz

Points: _____

Reading Explorer 2 Unit 9

DIRECTIONS: Choose the correct answer for each question.

The Teenage Brain

[A] Parents, teachers, and anyone who regularly deals with teenagers knows how difficult the adolescent years can be. Adolescents have always been known to do wild - even dangerous - things. This was thought to be due to the foolishness of youth. Now, brain-imaging technology allows scientists to study the physical development of the brain in more detail than ever before. Their discoveries have led to a new theory of why teens act the way they do.

A Work in Progress

[B] Recently, scientists discovered that though our brains are almost at their full size by the age of six, they are far from fully developed. Only during adolescence do our brains truly "grow up." During this time, they go through great changes, like a computer system being upgraded. This "upgrade" was once thought to be finished by about age 12. Now, scientists have concluded that our brains continue to change until age 25. Such changes make us better at balancing our impulses with the need to follow rules. However, a still-developing brain does this clumsily. The result, scientists claim, is the unpredictable behavior seen in teenagers.

Pleasure Seekers

[C] The studies confirm that teens are more likely to take risks and behave in extreme ways. Fortunately, the news isn't all negative. As brain scientist B. J. Casey points out, the teen brain inspires such behavior in order to help teenagers prepare for adult life.

[D] One way the brain does this is by changing the way teens measure risk and reward. Researchers found that when teens think about rewards, their brains release more of the chemicals that create pleasure than an adult brain would. Researchers believe this makes the rewards seem more important than the risks, and makes teens feel the excitement of new experiences more keenly than adults do.

[E] Research into the structure of the teen brain also found that it makes social connections seem especially rewarding. As such, teens have an intense need to meet new people. Scientists suggest this is because as teens, we begin to realize that our peers may one day control the world we live in. Because it is still developing, a teen brain can change to deal with new situations. It therefore connects social rewards with even more pleasure. In this way, the brain encourages teens to have a wide circle of friends, which is believed to make us more successful in life.

[F] Unfortunately, this hunt for greater rewards can sometimes lead teens to make bad decisions. However, it also means that teens are more likely, and less afraid, to try new things or to be independent. The scientists' findings suggest that in the long run, the impulses of the teen brain are what help teens leave their parents' care and live their own lives successfully.

- _____ 1. What is this passage mainly about?
- a. the possible reason teenagers behave as they do
 - b. a new technology that is changing opinions
 - c. the biggest problems teenagers face
 - d. the types of risks teenagers take
- _____ 2. What is another word for *adolescents* in paragraph A?
- a. parents
 - b. teachers
 - c. scientists
 - d. teenagers
- _____ 3. Which sentence from paragraph E gives the main idea?
- a. Research into the structure of the teen brain also found that it makes social connections seem especially rewarding.
 - b. Scientists suggest this is because as teens, we begin to realize our peers may one day control the world we live in.
 - c. Because it is still developing, a teen brain can change to deal with new situations.
- _____ 4. In the first sentence of paragraph E, what does *it* refer to?
- a. a connection
 - b. research
 - c. the teen brain
 - d. excitement
- _____ 5. According to the passage, which of the following is **NOT** true?
- a. Our brains are fully developed by the age of 12.
 - b. Social connections are very important to teenagers.
 - c. Teens feel more excitement over new things than adults.
 - d. A teen's desire to try new things leads to being an independent adult.

DIRECTIONS: Choose the correct answer for each question.

What Are They Thinking?

[A] Parents often become nervous when their teenage children go out for the day. "What kind of trouble will they get into this time?" is often a question on many parents' minds. And there may actually be good reason for parents to worry. Research suggests that teenagers, and young people in general, do tend to take bigger risks than older people.

[B] While some risks may be rather harmless, teenagers sometimes take risks which can be dangerous. This could be riding a bicycle down a hill at full speed without a helmet or skating on a frozen lake where the ice conditions may not be completely safe.

[C] Why do they do these things? Scientists believe the pleasure or excitement a teenager gets from these activities is far greater than that of an adult. In other words, the reward teenagers receive far outweighs the risks.

[D] Older theories suggested that teenage brains were not fully developed. Psychologists responsible for these theories stated that this lack of brain development was responsible for one key problem. This was the fact that teenagers could not make a clear connection between their actions and any possible negative results. In short, teenagers were simply not yet smart enough to realize the bad things that could happen to them.

[E] More recent theories, however, present a very different explanation. According to these newer theories, teenage risk taking is not due to a lack of brain development. By contrast, they conclude that risk taking is part of the development process itself. By acting in ways that adults might consider foolish and even dangerous, teenagers are actually exploring new opportunities and discovering their own personal limits. This helps teenagers in two ways. First of all, it allows them to identify the types of people they are. Second, and perhaps more importantly, it helps to make their future actions safer. By finding out where their own boundaries are, teenagers can learn from their experiences.

[F] If these newer theories are correct, what should nervous parents do? Of course, they should not stop worrying about their children. However, the next time their kids do something that seems risky, they should remember one thing. We now know that the experience kids gain in the present may help them become more complete adults in the future.

____ 6. What is this passage mainly about?

- a. the types of trouble that young people get into
- b. the reasons why young people often take risks
- c. the correct way for parents to protect their kids

____ 7. In paragraph C, what does the word *outweigh* mean?

- a. is greater than
- b. is less than
- c. is the same as

____ 8. Which of the following is **NOT** mentioned as a newer theory of why young people take risks?

- a. Risk taking allows young people to find out who they are as individuals.
- b. Risk taking helps to make the future actions of young people safer.
- c. Young people take risks because they want to gain the approval of their friends.

____ 9. In the last sentence of paragraph E, what does the word *their* refer to?

- a. adults
- b. teenagers
- c. future actions

____ 10. What would be the best heading for the final paragraph?

- a. Parents' Greatest Fears
- b. It's All for a Reason
- c. Your Kids Are More Mature Than You Think

DIRECTIONS: Read the claims below. Does each one show a high or low degree of confidence? Write "H" or "L."

- 11. ____ We have discovered the reasons for the spread of the virus.
- 12. ____ The engineers think there may be a problem with the new design.
- 13. ____ The teacher thinks that some students possibly cheated on the exam.
- 14. ____ The scientist pointed out the problems with the new theory.
- 15. ____ The police concluded that the cause of death was natural.

DIRECTIONS: Complete each sentence with the correct word or phrase from the box.

excitement	deal with	intense	realized	go through
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16. There was great _____ when we found out we were having twins.
17. She had a(n) _____ headache. She'd never had such a strong one before.
18. They never thought they would _____ something as scary as a house fire.
19. It was a tough time for me. I really struggled to _____ the problems in my life.
20. Steve started running when he _____ he was five minutes late.

DIRECTIONS: Match each vocabulary word to its meaning.

- a. risk
- b. reward
- c. upgrade
- d. pleasure
- e. conclude

- ____ 21. a good feeling
- ____ 22. a possible danger
- ____ 23. to make a decision based on all the information
- ____ 24. make something better
- ____ 25. receiving something good for your behavior or actions

Thanks!