FOCUS

UNIT TEST 7 ● GROUP A

Dictation, Listening and Reading

Name: _____

Class: _____

Total: _____/30

Dictation

1 [Track 14] Listen and write the sentences you hear, including the punctuation.

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Listening

2 [Track 15] You will hear four different recordings. For questions 1–4, choose the correct answer, A, B or C.

1 What would be the best headline for this report?

A Teens are becoming obsessed with technology

B Making the most of what technology can offer

C How technology is changing the older generation's lives

2 Which sentence best describes the situation?

A The email arrived without an attachment.

B The grandfather can't open the attachment.

C The grandfather can't find the photos he downloaded.

3 The speaker says that

A Michael is slightly underweight.

B Michael has lost weight recently by eating carefully.

C Michael's recent weight gain is nothing to be worried about.

4 One reason the girl was ill was because she

A was obsessed with losing weight.

B did too much sport.

C wasn't getting enough sleep.

_____/8

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Reading

3 Read the text and answer the questions.

EUGENE GOOSTMAN PASSES A TEST

Eugene Goostman is a thirteen-year-old boy from Odessa in Ukraine. He has got a pet guinea pig and his father is a doctor. In 2014, he passed a test that some people say had never been passed before. Is Eugene a genius? In fact, he doesn't really exist at all.

Eugene is a chatterbot. That is, a computer programme which can listen and reply to questions. You may have one on your smartphone. You can ask it to do simple tasks like find out what the weather is like in Portugal or how many dollars there are to the euro. You can also try to have a conversation with your chatterbot, although their answers don't always make sense. However, Eugene is more advanced than these very basic versions. He actually managed to fool some people into thinking he was human in a test thought up over 60 years ago.

The test he passed is called the Turing Test, named after the computer expert, Alan Turing, who became famous for his work on the Enigma code machine during the Second World War. This was a German machine which was brought to England in 1939 from Poland. By breaking the code, Turing was able to find out German war plans in advance. In 1950, Turing wrote a paper which predicted that, one day, robots would have the intelligence to carry out a human-like conversation. Two years later, in 1952, he finalised the rules of a test which would show whether or not this intelligence existed. The main rule was that, if any computer persuaded 30 percent of the people reading or listening to the answers that it was human, it would pass the test. Turing passed away in 1954 but the challenge lived on.

Interestingly, Turing based his test on a party game, called Imitation, which he enjoyed taking part in. In this game, a set of questions were given to a man and a woman. They typed their answers, not necessarily truthfully, and the other party guests had to try to guess who had written which set of answers. The theory was that there would always be some clues that would give them away. Turing died without knowing whether any robot would ever manage to pass his test but, in 2014, on the sixtieth anniversary of his death, Eugene Goostman managed to do it.

Not everyone is impressed by Eugene's accomplishment. Some say that Eugene wasn't the first chatterbot to pass the test. This is technically true but the previous tests were either too short or they were judged by an audience rather than experts. These factors meant that the results weren't conclusive. Eugene's test involved many more questions but there were still criticisms. The main one involves Eugene's 'human' profile. His designers deliberately made him a thirteen-year-old with poor English so that judges would be more likely to ignore his strange or irrelevant answers than they would if he was a native speaker adult. Finally, even if he was the first chatterbot to really pass the test, many people argue that Eugene doesn't actually possess real intelligence. All it can do is imitate intelligence. In other words, it is unable to think or learn like a real human being.

Chatterbots may not be ready to take over the world yet but they can have uses. They can perform basic tasks on a smartphone while we are unable to press buttons on our phones ourselves, such as while driving. They can also be used to create believable characters in video games which can follow orders and report on what is happening. However, robots with real intelligence are still a long way off. You won't be able to get one to do your homework for a few more years, I'm afraid!

1 What skills do chatterbots have?

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2 How is Eugene different to the programmes we have on our smartphones?

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3 What does a computer programme need to be able to do to pass the Turing test?

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4 What was believed about the game Imitation?

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5 Why do some people think Eugene's test was not fair?

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6 What are the main uses for chatterbots at the moment?

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