

2 Bright Ideas

Reading

A Read the list of mobile phone features and rank them in order of how important they are to you. (1 = most important; 8 = least important). Justify your list to your partner.

large memory	☐	front-facing camera	☐
pixel-rich screen	☐	fingerprint scanning	☐
wireless charging	☐	high-capacity battery	☐
heart rate monitor	☐	high-quality camera lens	☐

C Do you read reviews before you buy a product? Why? / Why not? Discuss with a partner.

D Quickly read the reviews. Which ones contain information about the look of the new phone?

B Would you be willing to pay a lot more for a phone that had all of your favourite features? Why? / Why not?


reviewit
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The New Genius4 by ABT: What's the verdict?




A Michael

Until a few years ago, the typical Android phone was hideously ugly and made of cheap and nasty-looking plastic. Then along came ABT with its breakthrough Genius1, in an attractive, minimalist design. Without doubt, it was the best-looking Android phone of its time, inspiring many firm followers and prompting a slew of copycats.

Fast-forward three years and four iterations of phones, and the Genius4 is still much the same. Like the Genius1, a glass-covered front blends into the metal frame creating a sleek look. But so what? Since ABT's competitors took note of the Genius' radical design, the market has been flooded with look-alike devices, thus rendering the new Genius4 model generic and unexciting. Imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery, but the once-seminal design of the Genius4 could be its downfall.

For diehard Genius fans, the iconic design will suffice, but those hankering for the next big thing should look no further than Core's X7i model. Its impossibly slim lines and not inconsiderably lower price are sure to please. Stay tuned for more about that in our next issue.



B Amelia

My grandmother makes and receives calls. Occasionally, she engages in SMS exchanges – mind you, nothing too challenging – simple text, no attachments. She's not fussed with photos, emails or apps – her requirements are the most basic. The Genius4 would suit her to a T. In fact, senior citizens should be lining up around the block like teens for Tay Tay concert tickets to get their hands on this device.

Unfortunately for ABT, the granny market was not what they had in mind for the Genius4. Print and TV ads, brimming with 20-somethings sporting zeitgeist beards, genie pants and floppy beanies, are testament to that. The phone, however, doesn't measure up for that demographic. Generations Y and Z need high-capacity batteries, desktop-quality web pages, good music storage, better video capabilities and a camera to deliver top-notch selfies. The Genius4 falls flat.

Although the camera has similar specs to other phones, it has a nasty tendency to over expose images and lose detail. It's nowhere near as good as the best phone cameras on the market, and for an asking price of £499, I would expect it to be.



C Dina

Contrary to popular opinion, interesting things are happening in the smartphone world. Not only has the bar been raised significantly in terms of what we expect from our phones and their features, we've also been exposed to a wealth of new technologies and novel ways of interacting with our phones.

But if you've found recent offerings to be underwhelming, ABT's new Genius4 isn't likely to make you deviate from that position. It's not that the Genius4 is a bad phone – it decidedly isn't – but rather the £499 Genius4 is just a phone in a world where other smartphones are trying to be so much more.

With the Genius4, ABT is still incorporating elements that have been around since its Genius1. And although the Genius4 is surely better than any of the versions that preceded it – improved audio quality, brighter screen – little has changed in terms of the range and quality of available features. So the question that needs to be asked is: Is being the best phone ABT has ever made enough? I'm not convinced it is.

- E** Read the *Exam Close-up*. Then underline the key words in the *Exam Task* below.

Exam Task

You are going to read reviews about a new phone. For questions 1 – 10, choose from the people (A – D). The people may be chosen more than once.

Which person gives each of these opinions about the new phone?

- 1 A specific feature does not represent value for money.
- 2 The manufacturer's claims are difficult to believe.
- 3 A specific product on the market is superior to it.
- 4 It confirms a widely-held view that current phones are boring.
- 5 It set the standard for a new breed of phone.
- 6 The design outweighed more important considerations.
- 7 It is an improvement on the manufacturer's previous models.
- 8 The suitability for its intended market is questionable.
- 9 Its major selling point is no longer unique.
- 10 It is ideal for people whose phone needs are uncomplicated.

Exam Close-up

Scanning texts for information

- Read the questions carefully and underline the key words in each.
- Scan the text to look for words, phrases or ideas with similar meanings to the key words you underlined. It is highly unlikely that the exact same words will be in the question and the text.
- Remember that some sections of the text may not contain any information connected to the questions, so scanning can save you time.

- F** Complete the sentences with these adjectives from the text.

durable firm generic hefty iconic minimalist radical underwhelming

- 1 The logos for brands such as Apple and Ferrari have become _____ and are instantly recognisable.
- 2 I have to say, 2GB of RAM is _____ when you can easily find an affordable computer with 4 or 8GB.
- 3 Jules is a _____ believer that advanced technology will be the answer to all of humanity's problems.
- 4 The new computer lab is open-plan and furnished in a _____ style with basic pieces in white.
- 5 To tackle pollution, factories will be required by law to install high tech furnaces or face a _____ fine.
- 6 Titanium has many applications, particularly in aviation, where it is used in jet engines because it is light but _____.
- 7 It is now obvious that building more roads isn't the answer; the city needs a more _____ approach to transport policy.
- 8 The architecture is predictable and lacking in originality; it is just another _____ office building.



D Frank

I admit, I didn't do any research before heading out in search of a new phone. All I knew was that it had to be attractive. Some might scoff, but that's a genuine concern for a lot of phone buyers.

Well, there I was at PriceMart when I came across the Genius4. The futuristic look was appealing, and the unibody came in some cool colours like gold, midnight blue, lime and burnt orange. I was completely sold on it. So despite the hefty price tag, I happily forked out the cash.

That new phone feeling we all know lasted just two days. While composing a text message, the keypad jammed. Rebooting solved the problem, but I wasn't happy. Shortly after, the screen developed a pinkish tinge. No amount of adjusting the settings could right it. Had I read some reviews about the model, I would have steered clear of it. The last straw came when it fell on the floor, shattering the screen. According to ABT, the phone is especially durable and has withstood many drop tests. What did they test it on? A soft pillow? I'm claiming a refund.

- What effect would losing your mobile phone have on your life? Why?
- Do you think using mobile phones too much is detrimental to our physical or mental health? Why? / Why not?

Ideas Focus



Vocabulary

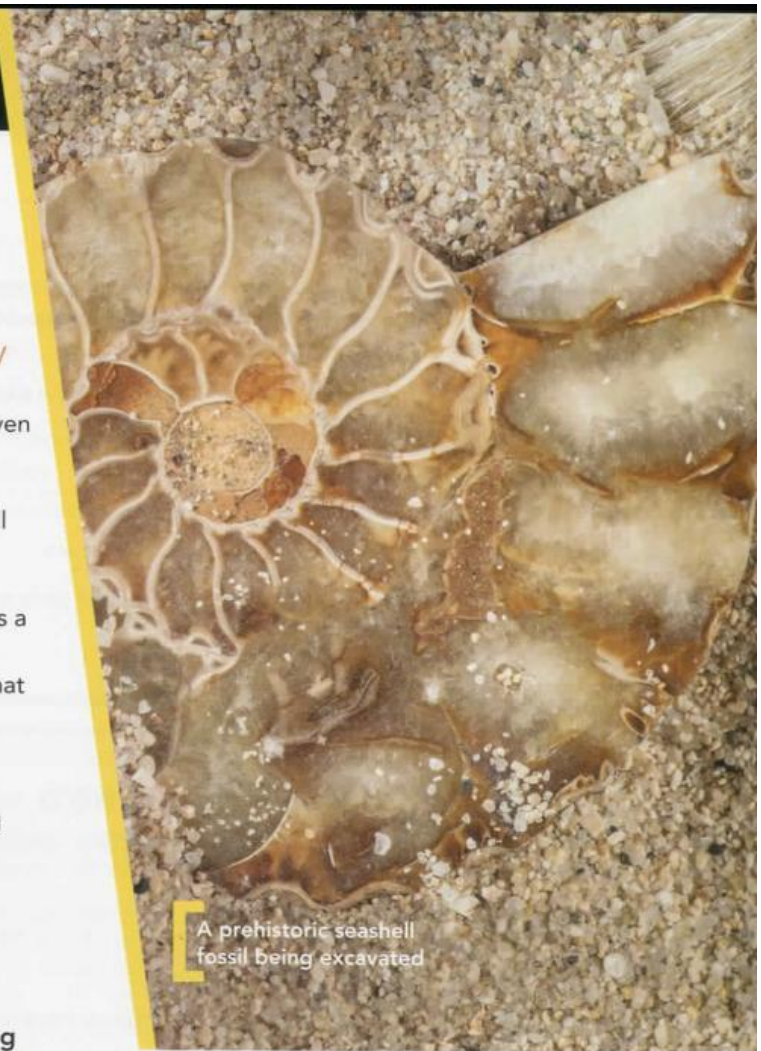
A Circle the correct words. In your notebook, write sentences with the words you did not use.

- 1 Finding fossils of sea creatures here, we can **deduce** / **deduct** that the area was once covered by water.
- 2 The highlight of the physics seminar was a lecture given by an **eminent** / **imminent** scientist.
- 3 The light **omitted** / **emitted** by screens inhibits the production of melatonin, which makes it harder to fall asleep.
- 4 Causality is the most basic of all the **principals** / **principles** of physics; it simply means 'every effect has a cause'.
- 5 The security system uses infrared **censors** / **sensors** that activate a light when they detect movement.
- 6 According to the World Health Organization, we are very close to **eroding** / **eradicating** polio.
- 7 The process of nuclear **fission** / **fusion** entails splitting uranium atoms.
- 8 In the third century BC, Archimedes of Syracuse invented an **ingenuous** / **ingenious** method to raise water to higher levels.

B Match the groups of verbs to the relevant set of sentences (1–3). Then complete the sentences using the words from the correct group.

analyse / infer / interpret
calculate / compute / estimate
decompose / disintegrate / dissolve

- 1 a When sugar is added to hot water, the sugar _____ far more quickly than it does in cold water.
- b The meteorite hurtled through the atmosphere and _____ on impact with the Earth's surface.
- c On the forest floor, dead leaves had been completely _____ by the micro-organisms in the soil.
- 2 a Uncertain as to how to _____ the unusual results of the experiment, the biochemist sought the opinion of a colleague.
- b Scientists _____ rock samples taken from the area and were concerned to find high levels of radioactivity.
- c Astronomers measured the rate of expansion of the universe and _____ from this that it is 13 billion years old.
- 3 a A new navigation system enables cars to _____ the shortest, easiest route to a destination.
- b The Greek astronomer and mathematician Eratosthenes was the first person to _____ the circumference of the Earth.
- c At current production rates it has been roughly _____ that there is just enough oil to last the world about 50 years.



A prehistoric seashell fossil being excavated

C Underline two adjectives in each text that are similar in meaning. Then circle the adjective that means the opposite of the adjectives.

- 1 Unfortunately, most computer hardware rapidly becomes obsolete. Although this makes good business sense for the tech companies who continually make money, the consumer is forced to replace outdated hardware with something more advanced in order for their computer to run efficiently.
- 2 Style is what many people look for in a piece of furniture. More importantly, however, furniture needs to be functional so that it fulfils its intended purpose. Using computer models, designers can create utilitarian products that are both aesthetically pleasing and comfortable, without being impractical.
- 3 Italian scientist Galileo made groundbreaking observations in physics and astronomy, and supported the theory that the Earth and planets revolved around the sun. His unorthodox views were objectionable to all who held firmly to the conventional belief that the sun orbited the Earth. He was sentenced to house arrest for his revolutionary opinions.
- 4 In science, an idea remains abstract until it can be supported with concrete evidence. Scientists provide this through painstaking experiments and observation. Once they have tangible proof, they present their idea, or theory, to the rest of the scientific community for scrutiny.

Compound nouns

D Match the words to form compound nouns and then complete the sentences.

active artificial computer digital information operating search security
breach engine intelligence literacy native system technology users

- 1 Jack, who is 19, has grown up using technology such as the Internet and mobile phones; he's a real _____.
- 2 I loved the old _____ on my computer, the Windows XP, because it made all of the programs work well.
- 3 Millions of people have Instagram accounts, but I wonder how many are _____ who log on regularly.
- 4 By the time the company realised there was a _____, it was too late, as confidential data had already been stolen.
- 5 The job calls for _____; for example, you need to know how to read spreadsheets and scan for viruses.
- 6 Films are one thing, but do you think _____ will ever be able to perfectly mimic the human brain?
- 7 My _____ of choice is Google because I like the way the results are clearly displayed on the screen.
- 8 Helen, who is studying _____ at university, has decided to specialise in cloud computing and programming.

Prepositions

E Circle the correct word.

- 1 When you're surfing the web, you have the whole world **at / on** your fingertips.
- 2 Luckily, we managed to fix the broken generator, so it's **off / up** and running now.
- 3 If your company doesn't have an online presence, it's definitely **behind / past** the times.
- 4 **By / On** all accounts, the latest operating system hasn't won many fans.
- 5 I'm afraid you can't enter the laboratory; it's **off / out of** limits to visitors.
- 6 If high consumption continues, we will soon be **in / on** the brink of an energy crisis.
- 7 Conventional means won't solve this problem; we need to think **beyond / outside** the box.
- 8 Artificial intelligence is still **in / at** its infancy, but one day computers will think just like we do.
- 9 He downed the foul-looking liquid and **across / before** my eyes his skin turned a ghastly shade of green!
- 10 As an undergraduate, Max was **out of / under** his depth in the discussion of quantum theory with his professors.
- 11 Innovation is absolutely vital for any tech company hoping to stay **above / ahead** of the curve.
- 12 With the advent of more advanced technology, faster download speeds are **on / within** reach.

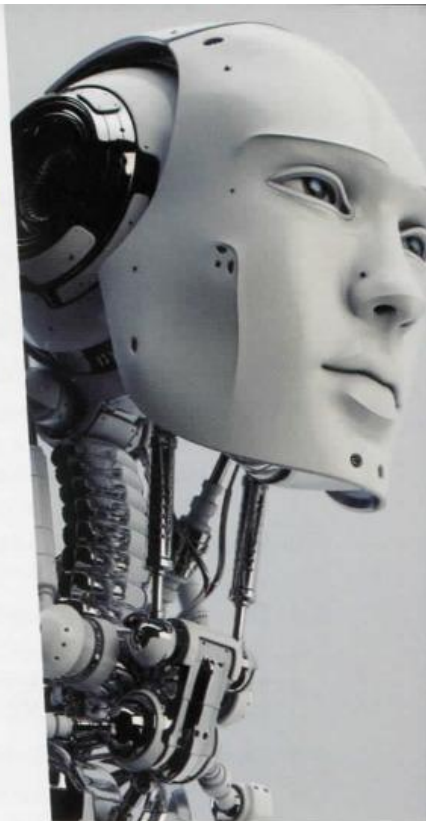
Word formation

F Complete the sentences with the correct form of the words.

- 1 Since the results of the experiment were _____, we had to repeat it.
- 2 The doctor was found to have acted _____ and was suspended.
- 3 We must take great care not to _____ the data that we collect.
- 4 Recent studies of centenarians have linked the Mediterranean diet to _____.
- 5 Unfortunately, despite continued research, some diseases remain _____.
- 6 Climate scientists are concerned about the _____ weather we have been experiencing.
- 7 Cancer research is a field which requires patience, dedication and _____.
- 8 Carbon dioxide accounts for the majority of gas _____ from human activities.

CONCLUDE
NEGLIGENCE
INTERPRET
LONG
CURE

PRECEDENT
PERSEVERE
EMIT



Collocations & Expressions

G Discuss the expressions with a partner. What do you think they mean?

back and forth back to front little by little more or less safe and sound time after time
touch and go wear and tear

Now complete the sentences.

- 1 Automotive technology has progressed to the point where soon, the driver will _____ just sit in car while it drives itself.
- 2 We want global agreement on climate change, but _____, talks between world leaders fail and we are nowhere near a solution.
- 3 When you drive in an urban environment, the constant stopping and starting leads to _____ on the brakes.
- 4 Due to a last-minute hitch, it was _____ whether the space shuttle would actually launch.
- 5 It wasn't obvious at first, but _____ the factory waste released into the river killed off all the fish.
- 6 Text messages flew _____ between Martin and George as they tried to find each other at the crowded football stadium.
- 7 An accident at the plant triggered an explosion; fortunately, all the workers were found _____.
- 8 Dressing quickly because he was late for a lecture, Nathan accidentally put on his jumper _____.

H Read the *Exam Close-up*. Then complete the *Exam Task* below.

Exam Task

For questions 1 – 8, read the text below and decide which answer (A, B, C or D) best fits each gap.

Genes Are Us

A human and a grain of rice not, at first (1) _____, look like cousins. And yet we share a quarter of our genes with that fine plant. All animals, plants and fungi share an ancestor that lived about 1.6 billion years ago. Everything that (2) _____ from that progenitor retains part of its original genome, embodying one of evolution's (3) _____ principles: if it's not broken, don't fix it. Since evolution has conserved so many genes, exploring the genomes of other species can (4) _____ light on genes involved in human biology and disease.

Genes can disappear and new ones can arise from mutations in DNA that previously (5) _____ some other function or no function at all. It's (6) _____ surprising that we share more genes with chimpanzees than with rice because, by (7) _____ large, we've shared most of our evolutionary journey with those apes. And as we (8) _____ through the small portion of our genes with no counterpart in chimpanzees, we may be able to find additional clues as to what makes us uniquely human.

- | | | | |
|------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1 A look | B glimpse | C sight | D glance |
| 2 A sprang | B proceeded | C descended | D originated |
| 3 A vital | B key | C prime | D crucial |
| 4 A shed | B aim | C hurl | D pitch |
| 5 A played | B enforced | C served | D favoured |
| 6 A very | B barely | C rarely | D hardly |
| 7 A or | B and | C nor | D but |
| 8 A sift | B seek | C scan | D sweep |



Exam Close-up

Identifying collocations

- Try to decide what type of word is missing, e.g. verb, preposition, etc. Consider whether it may be part of a collocation, idiom or set expression.
- Once you have chosen your answer from the options, read the sentence again to check that it makes sense.