

Skills Test Unit 7 Test

Everyday English

1 Complete the dialogue with phrases A–E.

- Simon** Hi Oscar, how's your computer course?
Oscar Oh, it's really useful, but I find the homework very difficult. What do you think
1 _____ ?
Simon 2 _____ speak to your teacher! I'm sure he would help if you asked him.
Oscar That's 3 _____. He's always really busy. 4 _____ change to an easier course instead?
Simon 5 _____, I'd definitely speak to him. That's what teachers are for. You mustn't give up without speaking to him first!

- A not a good idea
- B I should do
- C If I were you
- D You ought to
- E Should I

Listening

2 Listen to the talk. What is the talk about? Circle the correct answer:

- A the history of different nations around the world
- B statistics related to the world's population
- C the languages that people around the world speak

3 Complete the text with a word or a number.

The world's 2 _____ is growing by around 82 million people every year.

Between 1960 and 3 _____, the number of people in the world increased from three billion to over seven billion.

If we imagine the world's population as a 'global village' of 100 people, each person would represent a population of 4 _____ million.

If there were only 100 people in the world, there would be 5 _____ children.

In the 'global village' there would be 61 people from 6 _____ as 61% of the world's population lives there.

7 _____'s population is the smallest of all the continents.

12 out of the 100 people would speak Mandarin Chinese as their first language, five people would speak 8 _____ as their first language and five people would speak Spanish as their first language.

17 out of the 100 people wouldn't know how to 9 _____ and write.

10 _____ people in the 'global village' wouldn't have clean, safe water to drink.

Reading

The first language

Recent research has revealed that all the languages on our planet have a common ancestor. Scientists in New Zealand studied 504 modern languages, from English to Hindi to Mandarin Chinese, and discovered that every language on Earth has come from a dialect that people spoke in Africa in prehistoric times. According to the researchers in New Zealand, Stone Age people in Africa began to speak for the first time approximately 100,000 years ago. This was the first language in the world although it is a language that no one speaks any more. Early humans then left Africa, slowly moving across Europe, Asia, America and Australasia, and taking their language with them which then changed along the way.

Most scientists agree that the first humans came from Africa, but some scientists believe that languages developed at different times in different parts of the world and there is no connection between them.

Therefore, the research in New Zealand is important because it suggests this is not the case. The research showed that all languages must come from the same place – somewhere in Africa. So, how did the scientists make this discovery? Well, first they looked at how many different sounds there were in different languages across the world, and they discovered that the number of sounds that languages had was different in different continents. Then, they compared these languages with languages in Africa, and they found out that if a spoken language was a long way from Africa, it didn't have many sounds, but if a language was close to Africa, it had a lot of sounds. For example, Hadza, which is spoken in Tanzania in north-eastern Africa, has 69 sounds, English has about 45 sounds, Mandarin Chinese has 32 sounds, and Japanese has 20. The further away from Africa, the smaller the number of sounds. So it seems that tens of thousands of years ago, as human beings were moving further and further away from Africa, they used fewer and fewer sounds in their languages. So it seems that the first language was African! Interestingly, some African languages have an incredible number of sounds. Xu, a South African language, has 141 different sounds, for example. And some languages that are on the other side of the world from Africa have an extremely small number of sounds. Bandjalang, an Australian language, has only sixteen sounds, and Piraha, a Brazilian language, has only eleven.

The researchers in New Zealand wish they knew why ancient people used fewer and fewer sounds as they moved away from Africa, but it's impossible to be certain about this. What we do know, however, is that Africa was the home of the first people and the first languages in the world.

4 Read the text. Circle the correct answers (a–d).

- 1 According to recent research,
 - a there are more than five hundred languages in the world.
 - b the world's oldest language is Chinese.
 - c the earliest languages came from Europe.
 - d people still speak the world's first language today.
- 2 The research by the scientists from New Zealand showed that
 - a all languages in the world evolved from one African language.
 - b languages developed in different parts of the world with no connection between them.
 - c early human beings left Africa, slowly moving across Europe to Asia.
 - d all languages are very different from each other.
- 3 In their research, the scientists from New Zealand were interested in
 - a the number of words in the world's languages.
 - b how many people spoke each language.
 - c the number of languages in Africa.
 - d how many sounds there are in each language.
- 4 The researchers discovered that
 - a there are more sounds in Japanese than English.

- b there are fewer sounds in languages in countries that are far away from Africa.
 - c Chinese and Hadza have a similar number of sounds.
 - d languages had fewer sounds than they expected.
- 5 According to the research, languages with the smallest number of sounds are likely to be in
- a Australia.
 - b Africa.
 - c Europe.
 - d Asia.

Challenge!

5 Circle the correct answers.

The hyperpolyglot

A lot of people wish they ¹**speak / spoke** different foreign languages. That's because they'd like ²**to get / getting** to know people from different countries and cultures. However, not many people are as multilingual ³**as / that** Timothy Doner, a seventeen-year-old American schoolboy who ⁴**already has learnt / has already learnt** twenty-three languages. Timothy became famous when he posted a video of himself on YouTube speaking in twenty different languages. He ⁵**has been studying / was studying** languages since he was a small child, and has become fluent in African languages such as Wolof and Swahili, and Native American languages such as Ojibwe, as well as Mandarin Chinese and almost every European language. Timothy is a 'hyperpolyglot' – an unusual person ⁶**whose / who** can learn a language in only ⁷**a little / a few** days. If he continues to learn languages this quickly, one day he ⁸**speaks / 'll speak** every language in the world!