This exam comprises **four questions**: 1. and 2. contain two subsections which you must answer in full; 3. contains only one section which you must answer; in 4., answer **only one** of the two subsections.

Read the following text:

Throughout history, few things have inspired as much dishonesty as the pills, potions and promises to slow ageing, boost vitality, or extend life. Yet, amid the hype and hollow claims, a few golden truths remain. As far back as 400 BC, Hippocrates, widely considered the father of modern medicine, famously said, "Walking is man's best medicine." More than two millennia later, science is finally catching up with that wisdom.

People who walk more than 8,000 steps a day reduce their risk of premature death by half, compared to those who walk fewer than 5,000 steps – the threshold for a sedentary lifestyle. But beyond 8,000 steps, the benefits tend to plateau, which challenges the long-held belief in the magic of 10,000 steps a day.

For ageing and heart health, there is mounting evidence that pace really matters. Simply converting a 14-minute daily stroll into a seven-minute brisk walk has been associated with a 14 per cent reduction in heart disease.

An analysis of more than 450,000 adults in the UK used a genetic marker of biological age to reveal that by middle age, a lifetime of brisk walking reduces biological age by up to 16 years compared to a lifetime of slow walking.

A follow-up study suggested it is never too late to benefit from brisk walking. An inactive 60-year-old woman or man was modelled to gain around an additional year of life expectancy through simply introducing a ten-minute brisk walk into their daily routine.

The power of brisk walking can also be seen in its ability to predict future health outcomes. It has been shown to be a stronger predictor of the risk of dying from heart disease than traditional predictors such as blood pressure and cholesterol, while also being a more powerful predictor than many other measures of lifestyle – including diet, obesity levels, and total physical activity.

In fact, perhaps the single most informative question a doctor could ask their patient is: "How fast is your walking pace in comparison to other people?"

Importantly, walking has a halo of benefits beyond physical health. It can help with brain activity, doubling creative idea production. Indeed, the systems in the brain that support memory and imagination are also the same as those activated during whole-body movement.

Many of us already use this very phenomenon, walking to think about problems and arrive at solutions or insights that would otherwise remain elusive. Context is also important here, with the mental health and cognitive benefits of walking thought to be enhanced when walking through nature.

1. Answer the two subsections in this question. (2.5 points)

1.1. After reading the text, indicate whether the following statements are True (T), False (F) or the information is Not Given (NG). In true and false cases only, copy the part of the text which justifies your answer. (1.5 points)

1. According to the text, among many historically false remedies, some have proven to be true.

2. Running more than 8 miles a day reduces the risk of heart disease considerably, according to recent studies.

3. According to the text, if you walk slower than 5 km per hour, the expected benefits of walking tend to drop.

4. After conducting a study, scientists concluded that 16-year-olds were the ones that walked the fastest in the UK.

5. Someone who has never done any sport will not benefit from walking when they are old.

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6. By analysing how fast a person walks, doctors can foresee a patient's prospects regarding their health.

1.2. Find a synonym (S) or an antonym (A) in the text for each of the following words. (1 point)

1.chasing, reaching (S) 2. rhythm (S) 3. lose (A) 4. results (S) 5. stay (as a verb; S)

2. Answer the two subsections in this question. (2.5 points)
2.1. Write a NEW sentence that has the same meaning as the given one. Use the word or expression in brackets. (1.5 points)

1. It is said that the actor is very kind. (*to*)

2. The referee panel postponed the match because of the rain. (*by*)

3. He is too young to drive. (*isn't*)

4. He started playing tennis five years ago. (*has*)

5. "Will you help me carry this?", she asked. (*whether*)

6. He didn't go out because he was tired. (*been*)

2.2. Answer the following questions about pronunciation. (1 point)

1. Which of the following pairs of words are pronounced the same? must/most, arrange/array, deceit/decide, their/there, high/hay.

2. In which of the following words does the stress fall on the first syllable? defeat, governance, accordance, enjoy, duplicity.

3. In which two words is/are the underlined letter/s pronounced as in "liked"? watched, beloved, wanted, dropped, intended.

4. In which word do we pronounce the letter "l" as in "align"? should, calm, sold, half, talk.

3. In this text, fill each one of the gaps with a word taken from the box below. Bear in mind that there are *five extra words* which you must leave out. Each word may be used only once. (2 points)

In recent years, **1.** _____and more students have decided to take a **2.** _____year before starting university. This term refers to a break **3.** _____formal education, usually lasting twelve months, during **4.** _____young people travel, work, volunteer, or simply **5.** _____time to figure out what they want in life. For some, the decision is based on the need to **6.** _____after years of academic pressure. For others, it's about gaining **7.** _____experience or improving their level of independence **8.** _____beginning university studies. A year of that sort can also help

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students discover new interests, develop practical **9.** _____, or even change **10.**_____career goals. Travel is one of the most popular choices during this period. Exploring other countries and cultures **11.** _____be exciting and eye-opening. It allows young people to become more open-minded and learn how to **12.** _____ to unfamiliar situations. Many students also use this time to **13.**_____in social or environmental projects, helping communities in need **14.** _____ making a positive impact.

Of course, taking a year **15.** _____isn't the right option for everyone. Some students find it difficult to return to academic life after a long **16.** _____. Others may worry that they will lose motivation or fall behind their peers. Financial concerns are also a factor —travelling and living **17.** _____can be expensive, and not everyone can **18.** _____it. However, if well planned, a gap year can be a valuable and enriching experience. It gives young people the **19.** _____to learn outside the classroom and return to their studies with a clearer mind and renewed energy.

In the end, a gap year is not about doing nothing —it's about **20.** _____in a different way.

skills	**gap**	**abroad**	**take**	**can**
rest	**learning**	**of**	**lend**	**afford**
shadow	**linking**	**adapt**	**from**	**which**
while	**chance**	**more**	**before**	**whom**
off	**volunteer**	**life**	**their**	**break**

4. Answer ONE of the following subsections. (3 points)

4.1. Write **an e-mail** addressed at a politician called Mary Smith discussing the benefits and challenges of offering free higher education to all students, regardless of income. (140 words)

4.2. Imagine you are the director of the school blog. Write an **opinion article** on whether smartphones should be allowed in the classroom. Consider arguments for both students and teachers. (140 words)

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