Reading Part 3: Reading for Information

Time: 10 minutes

Read the following message:

A. At first sight it looked like a typical suburban road accident. A
Land Rover approached a Chevy Tahoe estate car that had stopped at a kerb; the Land Rover pulled out and tried to pass the Tahoe just as it started off again. There was a crack of fenders and the sound of paintwork being scraped, the kind of minor mishap that occurs on roads thousands of times every day. Normally drivers get out, gesticulate, exchange insurance details and then drive off. But not on this occasion. No one got out of the cars for the simple reason that they had no humans inside them; the Tahoe and Land Rover were being controlled by computers competing in November's DARPA Urban Challenge.

B. The idea that machines could perform to such standards is startling. Driving is a complex task that takes humans a long time to perfect. Yet here, each car had its on-board computer loaded with a digital map and route plans, and was instructed to negotiate busy roads; differentiate between pedestrians and stationary objects; determine whether other vehicles were parked or moving off; and handle various parking maneuvers, which robots turn out to be unexpectedly adept at.

C. It is a remarkable transition that has clear implications for the car of the future. More importantly, it demonstrates how robotics sciences and Artificial Intelligence have progressed in the past few years - a point stressed by Bill Gates, the Microsoft boss who is a convert to these causes. 'The robotics industry is developing in much the same way the computer business did 30 years ago,' he argues. One can envision a future in which robotic devices will become a nearly ubiquitous part of our day-to-day lives,' says Gates. 'We may be on the verge of a new era, when the PC will get up off the desktop and allow us to see, hear, touch and manipulate objects in places where we are not physically present.'

D. What is the potential for robots and computers in the near future? The fact is we still have a way to go before real robots catch up with their science fiction counterparts, Gates says. So what are the stumbling blocks? One key difficulty is getting robots to know their place. This has nothing to do with class or etiquette, but concerns the simple issue of positioning. Humans orient themselves with other objects in a room very easily. Robots find the task almost impossible.

E. Not given in any of the above paragraphs.

Decide which paragraph, A to D, has the information given in each statement below. Select E if the information is not given in any of the paragraphs.

1. Tackling the Issue using a different approach introduced new problems.
(☐)
2. A complex task, easily adapted by the robots was shocking for everyone
(☐)
3. Designation of the area as a natural reserve negatively impacted aboriginal people.
(☐)
4. Examples of robots at work are extraordinary as no such work can be done by humans.
(☐)
5. A strange scene on the road after mishap, not the usual day one.
(☐)
6. Why timescales are impossible to predict is the reason behind the intelligence.
(☐)
7. The tasks which cannot be performed by artificial intelligence.
(☐)
8. Following the pattern of an earlier development and stepping onto progress.
(☐)
9. The ethical issues of robotics technology with the introduction of masses.
(☐)

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