

Name: _____



ADVANCED 1 - SKILLS TEST 1

LISTENING COMPREHENSION

- **PART 1. You will hear three different extracts. For questions 1-6, choose the answer (A,B,C) which best fits according to what you hear. There are two questions for each extract.**

Extract One

You hear two friends discussing the topic of reading books in printed or electronic form.

1. The woman admits that when she reads printed novels
 - A she misses out the more boring parts.
 - B she looks ahead to see what will happen.
 - C she fails to take care of the book.
2. Which aspect of their enjoyment of reading do the friends agree about?
 - A how much it depends on the quality of writing
 - B how convenient electronic books are
 - C how pleasant it is to own a printed book

Extract Two

You hear a woman telling a friend about a book he gave her.

3. What is she doing in the conversation?
 - A describing the book's plot
 - B describing the main characters' behaviour
 - C describing her own reaction to the book
4. Why does she mention the book's cover?
 - A to suggest that it failed to reflect its contents
 - B to criticise a weakness in the book's plot
 - C to explain why the book has sold well

Extract Three

You hear two writers talking about their daily routine.

5. When talking about finding ideas for writing, the man says that
 - A he uses emails as a source of stimulation for stories.
 - B he looks for original plots in newspaper stories.
 - C he avoids depending on the internet for storylines.
6. They both think that taking exercise
 - A is a pleasant way of taking a break from writing.
 - B is effective for helping to think clearly.
 - C is necessary but unappealing.

- **PART 2. You will hear a young man called Sam Parker talking about volunteer work in other countries. For questions 1-8, complete the sentences with a word or short phrase.**

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERING

- Some countries have specific rules about the (1) of people who volunteer for work there.
- Sam learnt most about (2) during his time at a safari park.
- Sam appreciated being taught to use (3) and basic tools to build a hut.
- Sam says that (4) is the minimum commitment recommended for a placement.
- A volunteer should not expect an organization to fit in with his or her (5), according to Sam.
- Sam says that it is best to have a clear idea of who the (6) are for an agency that finds a position for volunteers.
- According to Sam, those volunteering projects that are most effective provide (7) for volunteers to read before going.
- Sam was surprised that he never suffered from (8) during his time volunteering.

READING COMPREHENSION. You are going to read an article about using video games in education. For questions 1-6, choose the answer (A,B,C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Using video gaming in education

It has become conventional wisdom that spending too much time playing video games has a detrimental effect on children's studies and their social development. However, some educationalists are now questioning this theory and are using video games as effective educational tools thus bridging the gap between recreational and educational activities.

Due to the sophisticated nature of today's games, teachers are able to justify the inclusion of video and online games for many pedagogical reasons. There may, for example, be sociological, psychological, and ethical implications built into the gameplay. Harvey Edwards, who teaches IT classes in London, was one such educator who decided to use video games in his lessons. To do this, he chose Minecraft, an online game in which players create and develop imaginary worlds. He was somewhat uneasy about attempting such an unconventional approach, not because of some students' unfamiliarity with the game but rather due to them not being able to make sense of what he was trying to do with it. He worried that it might interfere with his learners' focus, but he couldn't have been more surprised by the results.

Minecraft is an example of a 'sandbox game', in which gamers roam around and change a virtual world at will. Instead of having to pass through numbered levels to reach certain places, there's full access from start to finish. The original version can be adapted to control which characters and content are left in. Each student can then be allocated tasks – such as house-building, locating items or problem-solving – which they must complete within the game. Elements of more general skills can be subtly incorporated into the lessons, such as online politeness and safety, teamwork and resolving differences. Edwards feels that presenting such lessons in the context of a game students probably already know and enjoy enables him to connect with them at greater depth, and in more motivational ways.

Bolstered by his success, Edwards introduced his approach to another school nearby. He recalls that the first couple of sessions didn't live up to his expectations. Those who had played Minecraft before were keen for others to adopt their own style of play. Unsurprisingly, this assortment of styles and opinions as to how the game should proceed were far from harmonious. However, the sessions rapidly

transformed into something more cohesive, with the learners driving the change. With minimal teacher input, they set about choosing leaders and established several teams, each with its own clearly-defined role. These teams, now party to clear common goals, willingly cooperated to ensure that their newborn world flourished, even when faced with the toughest of challenges.

'Human' inhabitants in a Minecraft 'society' are very primitive and wander around the imaginary world, waiting for guidance from players. This dynamic bears a resemblance to traditional education, an observation highlighted by Martina Williams, one of the leaders of the group. 'Through the game, we were no longer passive learners in the classroom, being told what and how to learn, but active participants in our own society.' Each group member had ideas as to how their function should develop. The leaders, meanwhile, had a vision for their virtual world as a whole, encouraging everyone to play their part in achieving the group's goals. Through creating their own characters and using these to build their own 'world', students will have gained some experiential understanding of societal structure and how communities work.

But not everyone is convinced by video games' potential academic value. While many progressive commentators cite extensive evidence to maintain that video games encourage collaboration and build problem-solving skills, more traditional factions continue to insist they are a distraction that do not merit inclusion in any curriculum. Even less evangelical cynics, who may grudgingly acknowledge games have some educational benefit, assert that this is only the case in the hands of creative educators. However, the accusation most often levelled at video games is that they detract from the social aspect of the classroom, particularly taking part in discussions. Dr Helen Conway, an educational researcher, argues that video games can be used to promote social activities. 'Students become animated talking about the game and how to improve their game-playing and problem-solving skills,' she says. 'I find it strange, this image that many people have,' Conway says. 'Children are often totally detached from their peers when undertaking more traditional activities, like reading books, but we never suggest that books are harmful because they're a solitary experience.'

1. The first time Edwards used a game in his classes, he was
 - A convinced that learners would realise why he wanted them to play it.
 - B convinced that learners would see the reasons for playing it.
 - C anxious that he had chosen the wrong one for learners to play.
 - D sure that his reasons for getting learners to play it were valid.
2. The writer suggests that Minecraft is a good choice of educational game because
 - A any number of learners can use it simultaneously.
 - B teachers can remove any inappropriate material.
 - C gamers can create educative tasks whilst playing it.
 - D players can develop their skills in a step-by-step way.
3. Which of the following words in the fourth paragraph is used to convey a feeling of approval?
 - A keen
 - B harmonious
 - C driving
 - D newborn
4. In the fifth paragraph, the writer draws a comparison between a Minecraft 'society' and
 - A relationships within the group as they played.
 - B the way in which countries organise themselves.
 - C typical students in a school environment.
 - D how leadership operates in different situations.
5. In the sixth paragraph, the writer feels that critics of video games in education
 - A are unwilling to admit that using them in class has benefits.
 - B make accurate observations about teachers who use them.
 - C use flawed research to support their objections to using them.
 - D acknowledge the drawbacks of more traditional teaching methods.
6. The words 'this image' in the sixth paragraph refer to
 - A people who criticise gaming in education.
 - B students discussing a game in a group.
 - C a group of students reading individually.
 - D a solitary player absorbed in a game.