You are going to read an article about happiness. For questions 1-7 choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

THE IMPOSSIBLE MOMENT OF DELIGHT

A recent survey has examined the well-trodden ground of the relationship between pleasure and money. Many studies have examined this, from any number of starting points, often concluding, in the oldest of old clichés, that money can't buy you happiness or, in more sophisticated terms, that happiness and pleasure often reside, not in riches in absolute terms, but in being richer than the people who happen to live to your left or your right. Other studies have claimed that comparison with the wealth of others leads to a "set-up for disappointment" and that a good attitude is all that matters.

This most recent study inquired into the wellbeing of 136,000 people worldwide and compared it to levels of income. It found, overall, that feelings of security and general satisfaction did increase with financial status. Money, however, could not lift its possessors to the next level, and was unable to provide enjoyment or pleasure on its own. The survey, published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, examined large numbers of people from almost every culture on Earth, and found much the same thing. The stereotype of the rich man who finds life savourless and without pleasure was not invented simply to keep the poor happy with their lot.

Paul Bloom addresses the same issue in his book *How Pleasure Works*. According to Bloom, at the point when people get the thing they really want, they enter a state of perfect pleasure. Both Bloom's book and the enormous survey concentrate on status and on the moment of getting possession of something we want. Are we satisfied and filled with pleasure when we get what we want? Bloom, looking at eager consumers, would say 'yes'; the survey tends to say 'not necessarily'. In my view, it's rare that we can actually pin down the specific moment when the feeling of pleasure is at its clearest.

Take the teenager determined to buy the latest must-have gadget, a woman setting out to get a new handbag, or a prosperous businessman who wants to add to his collection of Japanese *netsuke*. The setting out with the happy intention of spending; the entering of the shop; the examination of the wares; the long decision; the handing over of the money; the moment when the ownership of the goods is transferred; the gloating at home; the moment when the object is displayed to others. All these steps form a process in enjoyment, but almost all of them are redolent with anticipation or with retrospective glee. The moment where bliss is at its peak is over in a flash, and hardly exists at all. Everything else is expectation or memory.

Composers have always known this simple, basic truth: pleasure is half anticipation and half blissful recollection, and hardly at all about the fulfillment of the promise. The great musical statements of ecstasy, such as Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* or Schubert's first *Suleika* song, are literally all half crescendo and half languid recall. We look forward to pleasure; we look back on it. The moment of pleasure itself is over in a flash, and often rather questionable.

The hairband and geegaw emporium Claire's Accessories has a thoughtful, rather philosophical slogan to tempt its young customers. It sells itself under the strapline 'where getting ready is half the fun'. That is honest and truthful. A group of 14-year-old girls in their party best is nowhere near as successful an enterprise of pleasure as exactly the same girls putting on and trying out and discussing their hopes for the party in advance; not as successful either

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as talking it over the next day. The party itself, from the beginning of time, has consisted of a lot of standing around and gawping and giggling, and someone crying in the lavatory.

So any notion of fulfilled pleasure which insists on the moment of bliss is doomed to failure. Mr Bloom and the researchers of the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* were clearly happiest when undertaking their research, during which time they were looking forward to coming to a conclusion. And now they can sit back and start to say 'Yes, when I concluded my theory of pleasure and satisfaction…..' Even for philosophers of pleasure, another ancient and well-handled cliché about travel and life is true: getting there really is half the pleasure.

1. The writer says that previous studies of happiness have differed on
   A. whether having more money than others makes people happy.
   B. why people compare their financial situation to that of others.
   C. what makes people believe that money brings happiness.
   D. how important it is for people to think that they are happy.

2. According to the writer, the most recent survey
   A. confirmed a common belief about wealth and happiness.
   B. produced results that may surprise some people.
   C. provided more accurate information than many other surveys.
   D. found that there was no connection between money and happiness.

3. In the third paragraph, the writer says that his own opinion on the subject
   A. has been influenced by the results of the survey.
   B. is based on his personal feelings rather than on research.
   C. differs from what Bloom concludes in his book.
   D. might not be widely shared by other people.

4. The phrase 'Everything else' at the end of the fourth paragraph refers to
   A. most of the stages before or after buying something you really want.
   B. feelings that are less important than those already mentioned.
   C. other situations in which people get what they really want.
   D. other feelings at the moment of buying something.

5. The writer says that the musical works he mentions
   A. are not intended to produce feelings of intense happiness.
   B. sometimes disappoint people who listen to them.
   C. perfectly illustrate his point about pleasure.
   D. show how hard it is to generalize about pleasure.

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6. The writer says that the company Claire's Accessories understands that
   A. parties are less enjoyable for girls than getting ready for them.
   B. girls enjoy getting ready for parties less than any other aspect of them.
   C. looking good at parties makes girls happier than anything else.
   D. what girls wear for parties affects their memories of them.

7. The writer concludes that both Bloom and the researchers
   A. would agree with his own theory of pleasure.
   B. would agree with a certain cliché.
   C. have made an important contribution to the study of pleasure.
   D. have gone through a process he has previously described.

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