

READING PRACTICE

PART I: CLOZE TEXT

A. Read the passage below and decide which answer (A, B, C or D) that best fits each gap.

Speech is one of the most important ways of communicating. It consists of far more than just making noises. To talk or to (36)_____ by other people, we have to master a language, that is, we have to use combinations of sound that (37)_____ for a particular object or idea. Communication would be impossible if everyone made up their own language.

Learning a language is very important. The basic vocabulary of English is not very large, and only about 2000 words are needed to speak (38)_____ quite well. But the more words you know, the more ideas you can express, and the more precise you can be about their meaning.

Words are the main things we use (39)_____ what we want to say. The way we say the words is also very important. One tone of voice can express (40)_____ emotions and show whether we are pleased or angry for instance.

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|---------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| 1. A. understand | B. be understood | C. understanding | D. be understandable |
| 2. A. realize | B. think | C. stay | D. stand |
| 3. A. its | B. them | C. it | D. they |
| 4. A. to expressing | B. in expressing | C. expressed | D. to be expressed |
| 5. A. many | B. much | C. few | D. little |

B. Read the passage below and decide which answer (A, B, C or D) that best fits each gap.

The human memory is an incredibly powerful tool, but few of us make the most of it. In these days of high performance, (32)_____ greater demands are made on our memories, so what can we do to make them work more efficiently? The ancient Greeks realized that, in order to remember anything, you have to (33) it with something that is already fixed in your mind. They invented memory aids or “mnemonics”. Verbal mnemonics can be words or rhymes containing, for example, the first letters of the items of a list to be remembered. These were popular in Victorian schools, (34)_____ memorizing lists was a major part of “education”. Although modern educationalists tend to look (35)_____ this method of learning, it is still sometimes necessary. Visual mnemonics have recently been found to be especially powerful. So next time you have to remember how items are related, for example, create a “mind map”. You can draw a plan with items radiating from a central point and use different coloured pens to make the relationship between items (36)_____. You learn as you draw and then the visual image is easy to recall.

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|-----------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|
| 1. A. too | B. that | C. always | D. even |
| 2. A. realize | B. divide | C. associate | D. mix |
| 3. A. that | B. where | C. what | D. when |
| 4. A. down on | B. up | C. over | D. in |
| 5. A. available | B. clear | C. flexible | D. moving |

PART II: READING COMPREHENSION

A. Read the passage below and choose the best answer (A, B, C or D) to each question.

Life was very different in the 1950s than it is today. Divorce was not common, and most women with children didn't work. Children didn't come home after school to an empty house as many do today. Families did more things together. One of the favorite family **pastimes** was a drive in the country. Gas was cheap. People had big cars, and the whole family could ride comfortably. Before TV became popular, people talked to each other more. Children didn't have as many toys, and they played more games together. On Saturday, the neighborhood theaters had special movies for the children. The shows cost only 25 cents. People stayed at one job for most of their lives. They didn't change job for every few years like they do today. They also lived in the same house for a long time. They didn't move as much.

Services were better in the 50s. Doctors used to come to a sick person's house. Milkmen delivered fresh dairy products to home. There were no self-service gas stations, and attendants used to wash your car windows and check your oil free of charge.

1. *This is from _____.*
A. a textbook B. a letter to a friend C. a poster D. a diary
2. *The aim of the writer is to _____.*
A. point out the problems people had to face in the 50s
B. show how backward life was in the 50s
C. show what life was like in the 50s
D. prove that life in the 50s was more complex than today
3. *In the 50s _____.*
A. there were stricter laws about divorce B. members of a family got together more
C. communication was better D. most services were free of charge
4. *We can infer from the passage that today family members do not often talk to each other because _____.*
A. they don't stay at one job for a long time B. they often change their houses
C. they spend more time watching television D. they go to movies more often than they used to
5. *The word "pastimes" in paragraph one is closest in meaning to _____.*
A. 'activities' B. 'professions' C. 'experiences' D. 'hobbies'

B. Read the passage below and choose the best answer (A, B, C or D) to each question.

Since life began eons ago, thousands of creatures have come and gone. Some, such as the dinosaurs, became extinct due to naturally changing ecologic conditions. More recent threats to life forms are humans and their activities. Man has drained marshes, burned prairies, dammed and diverted rivers. Some of the more recent casualties of man's expansion have been the dodo, great auk, passenger pigeon, Irish elk, and Steller's sea cow.

Sadly, we can no longer attribute the increasing decline in our wild animals and plant species to "natural" processes. Many species are dying out because of exploitation, habitat alteration or destruction, pollution, or the introduction of new species of plants and animals to an area. As mandated by Congress, protecting endangered species, and restoring them to the point where their existence is no longer jeopardized, is the primary objective of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Endangered Species Program.

1. *In line 1, "eons" most nearly means _____.*
A. animals B. participles C. ages D. conditions
2. *Which of the following is a form of man's habitat alteration?*
A. Hurricanes B. Dammed rivers C. Snowstorms D. Glacial encroachment
3. *Which of the following have become extinct due to man's destruction?*
A. Irish elk B. Giant panda C. White Bengal D. African elephants
4. *According to this passage, _____.*
A. animals often bring about their own extinction
B. congress can absolutely end extinction of animals
C. a law is more important than human responsibility
D. man is the cause of some animal extinction
5. *The tone of this passage is _____.*
A. nationalistic B. pro-wildlife C. anti-wildlife D. feminist

___The end___

(Source. Adapted from various websites in the Internet)