

## SECTION A: READING COMPREHENSION

### Task 1. (Estimated time: 20' / Marks: 7)

First read the twelve headlines (a - l), then read the seven texts ( 1 - 7 ) and decide which text goes best with which headline.  
There are four headlines you do not need to use.  
(0) is the example.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| a) <b>CONSULTATION COMES UNDER FIRE</b>          | g) New belt-tightening policy           |
| b) <b>Don't let them go soft on E</b>            | h) <b>Old maid comes of age</b>         |
| c) <b>Every cloud has a silver lining</b>        | i) <b>PERILOUSLY PACKED</b>             |
| d) <b><i>Last orders at the Bar-I</i></b>        | j) <b>Research labelled unbiased</b>    |
| e) <b>Long live care home's bare-faced cheek</b> | k) <b>Scorching summer boosts sales</b> |
| f) <b>Making Toll Cheats Pay</b>                 | l) <b>What a lot of spendthrifts</b>    |

(0). = d

Warders called time on a secret brewery in Scotland's biggest prison — after they discovered 25 litres of potent home-made booze. Cunning cons in Barlinnie were rumbled after making illicit hooch from oranges, bread, sugar, water and Ketchup nicked from the kitchens in the Glasgow jail. The liquor, seized last week, was fermenting in large supermarket juice bottles inside low-risk Letham Hall, which houses "trusted" inmates. It is understood some lags have been stripped of their cushy kitchen jobs after supplying the ingredients for the low-grade ten per cent proof booze.

1.

MPs frequently moan about public cynicism regarding politics and ask each other what went wrong. Part of the answer lies in a shopping list of MPs expenses revealed under the freedom of information act. The honourable members are appalled by the publication, and well they might be. It shows that among the allowances that can be claimed for furnishing second homes within working reach of parliament, are up to £10,000 for a new kitchen, £1,000 for a bed, £600 for a dining table and £550 for a fridge freezer.

2.

One of the ways we are dealing with crime is by locking up more and more of our fellow human beings. The prison population now numbers 82,319 and has long since outstripped the capacity of the system. Chronic overcrowding has now reached the point at which the Ministry of Justice has ordered governors to ignore safety limits when admitting new inmates. Penal reformers are horrified by this latest evidence of crisis. The Prison Officers Association has warned that some sections of jails had become no go areas and there have been lurid accounts of criminals actually breaking into prisons to feed the unchecked drug habits of inmates denied rehabilitation treatment because the system is stretched to breaking point.

3.

Plans to downgrade ecstasy from Class A to Class B by the Government were greeted with outrage last night. The Government drugs panel meets next Friday to review evidence of the harm caused by ecstasy and the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs could advise that the drug is reclassified from Class A. The panel's chairman, Professor David Nutt, argued last year that ecstasy was less dangerous than alcohol and tobacco and North Wales Chief Constable Richard Brunstrom provoked outrage earlier this year by claiming the drug was safer than aspirin. Tory MP Ann Widdecombe said: "You would have thought the Government would have learnt their lesson with the downgrading of cannabis. They downgraded cannabis from Class B to Class C and had to reverse it. If they do this with ecstasy they will send out exactly the same message. They will probably have to reverse it again — and in the meantime many more lives will be lost." The final decision to reclassify ecstasy will be made by Home Secretary Jacqui Smith.

4.

London's West End retailers can celebrate strong summer sales compared with the rest of the UK thanks to dreadful weather and deep discounting. The capital's August retail sales were 8.2 per cent higher than last year, on a like-for-like basis, compared with a 1 per cent decline in the wider UK. The figures come as a surprise following recent news of toppling first half and quarterly profits for many major chain stores, including Next, Argos and DIY retailer Homebase. Head of retail Helen Dickenson said: "Despite the poor August weather, London's retail sales performance has remained buoyant. It has outperformed the rest of the UK this month and improved on last month's like-for-like figures by over two percentage points." In fact, the UK's disastrous summer weather has been named as a factor in London's ability to outperform the rest of the UK. While many outside London appear to have avoided the rain by staying indoors, Londoners took to the shops, with retail footfall in Central London 7.8 per cent higher than in August 2007.

5.

Three cheers for the Woodland House in St Austell Cornwall, which invites residents to make a wish, and then tries to make it come true. It came up trumps when a 90-year-old woman announced that she would like to be served fish and chips by a waiter wearing only a thong. A plucky member of staff obliged and the unidentified old lady said she thoroughly enjoyed the experience. There we would have loved to leave it, as an example of wrinkly fun. But a humour-free boss of charity which runs the home felt obliged to criticise staff who "overstepped the mark". Why? We hope the old lady continues to have treats served by comely chaps in sequined jockstraps.

6.

A government-led poll on nuke power breached the industry code of conduct because insufficient steps were taken to ensure members of the public were not led into giving the required response, it was ruled by the Market Research Standards Board. It is the second time the process has run into difficulties, following a High Court ruling in 2006 which found the Government's decision-making process had been unlawful as it had failed to engage in the fullest possible examination. Environmental campaigners Greenpeace said the ruling revealed the debate to be "a sham and an insult to the people who took part" and left the government's plans for new nuclear power stations "in disarray". The MRSB found that pollsters Opinion Leader failed to take "reasonable steps to ensure that respondents would not be led towards a particular answer" and ruled that "this was not a minor or trivial breach" of its code of conduct. "There were a number of examples where, objectively viewed, information was inaccurately or misleadingly presented, or was imbalanced, which gave rise to a material risk of respondents being led towards a particular answer," it found.

7.

Phantoms haunt the nation's tollbooths, as more and more drivers whiz past without paying. Now there are signs the joyride may end. This month, for the first time, the International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association will meet to discuss ways to fight this highway robbery. In Delaware, a half-dozen habitual offenders (over \$1,000 in violations) face felony charges. And in Florida, where turnpike-toll-evasion losses hit \$22 million last year, authorities have added blue lights at plazas to alert cops when violators blow through. Experts link the scofflaw surge to the spread of electronic-collection lanes on the country's 5,244 miles of toll roads. What's handy for honest drivers also appeals to cheaters, some of whom use special sleeves and sprays to hide license plates from toll-plaza cameras. Great. - A new reason for road rage.

EAEKO Hizkuntza Eskola Ofizialak / EE.OO.II. de la C.A.P.V.

## Task 2. (Estimated time: 30' / Marks: 7)

Read the following text, then choose the correct answer a), b) or c). (0) is the example.

### IT'S ALL ABOUT ME

It used to be that only oppressed minorities had the right to lay claim to victim status, but not any more: it seems that anyone and everyone can be a victim now. Forget the Oppression Olympics, the pointless debate over which identity group suffers the most discrimination; these days, as Frank Furedi noted in *The Culture of Fear*: "We are all expected to compete, like guests on a television programme, to prove that we are the most put-upon and pathetic people in the house, the most deserving of counselling and compensation."

It was Margaret Thatcher who inadvertently provided the catalyst for all this navel-gazing and self-obsession when she infamously pronounced that there is "no such thing as society. There are individual men and women and there are families. And no government can do anything except through people, and people must look after themselves first." Since then it's all been about "me me me"; not even 11 years of a Labour government have managed to halt our increasing narcissism or inject any sense of collectivism back into the national psyche.

Bookshop shelves groan with the weight of self-help manuals, designed to pander to and heal just about every psychic and emotional stress known to humankind, while misery lit (or misery porn as it's more accurately known) is fast outselling any other genre.

As writers scribe in unflinching detail their stories of brutalised childhoods, and of their survivals against all the odds, we lap up these tales of woe and clamour for more. Narratives that were meant to inspire and empower us with their messages of triumph over adversity serve instead as fodder for our most voyeuristic tendencies: it's starting to feel like there's an incredibly tasteless competition on to find the poor sod who has had the most miserable childhood in the history of the world, ever.

But as Libby Brooks observed recently in her excellent piece on the debate about rape: "Creating a hierarchy of victimhood helps no one." I couldn't agree more.

Even those with all the advantages aren't exempt from all this wallowing and internal reflection. Born with a silver spoon in your mouth and sent to all the best schools? Don't worry, there's a support group out there for you somewhere. Think you've always been happy and never wanted for anything? Well think again. No one gets through life unscathed: you're probably in denial and need a good dose of therapy to find out whatever it is you're repressing.

What's really lacking in all of this introspection is any sense of the bigger picture. These personal histories stand alone, testament to the individualism that has permeated every aspect of 21st-century life. Rather than examining and critiquing our social conditions, we're encouraged instead to look inwards, to heal ourselves and rid ourselves of any demons we may have picked up along the way. As a consequence of this we're failing to make those vital connections between our personal experiences and how our lives have been shaped by forces beyond our individual control.

But "the personal is political" was not just some trite feminist slogan dreamed up to help bored housewives make sense of their lot. As Carol Hanisch said in her essay of the same name: "personal problems are political problems. There are no personal solutions at this time. There is only collective action for a collective solution." Isn't it about time we started to embrace that kind of thinking again?

The discriminations and prejudices I've encountered in my life are not because I'm me, Cath Elliott: they're a direct result of the gender and social class I was born into. Counselling, self-help books or holistic therapies might make me better able to deal with what life has thrown or has yet to throw at

me, but it won't do anything to change the external conditions that impact negatively on me and mine.

So, the choice is ours. We can either continue to wallow in our victimhood, fighting to outdo each other with our tales of oppression and woe, and attempting to heal our lives in splendid isolation, or we can learn once again to recognise our shared experiences and start to fight together for change. We're only victims if we choose to be so. Personally I reject the label: I'd advise everyone else to do the same.

Adapted from *The Guardian*

0. According to the writer, today...
  - a) more and more people deserve counselling.
  - b) **the role of victim has been taken over by ordinary people.** ✓
  - c) we behave like contestants in TV reality shows.
1. What does the writer say about M. Thatcher?
  - a) She favoured the disappearance of collective thought.
  - b) She fought hard against individualism.
  - c) She introduced a sense of community in British society.
2. Which of these statements is TRUE?
  - a) Not all self-help books do help people.
  - b) Self-help manuals sell better than misery lit books.
  - c) There's an overkill of self-help books.
3. What is said in the text about writers today?
  - a) Most of them are lucky to have survived the adversities of life.
  - b) They provide readers with emotional recollections of their lives.
  - c) They seem to be entangled in a competition for the saddest life.
4. According to the article counselling and group therapies...
  - a) are being used by people from all walks of life.
  - b) have far better results with privileged people.
  - c) mainly satisfy the needs of repressed people.
5. In the writer's view what is missing in 21st century society is more...
  - a) introspective awareness.
  - b) political perspective.
  - c) self-criticism.
6. What's the writer's verdict on discrimination and prejudice?
  - a) They can only be fought out with alternative therapies.
  - b) They should be looked at from a wider angle.
  - c) They are to blame for gender and class inequality.
7. What is the purpose of the article?
  - a) To encourage people to stop whinging and join forces.
  - b) To analyse the current trend of self-pitying victimhood.
  - c) To look at the impact of society on consciousness and experience

### Task 3a. (Estimated time: 15' / Marks: 8)

Read the text, then choose the option that best fits each gap. (0) is the example.

#### WHY DO THIEVES STILL STEAL MOBILE PHONES?

As the government \_\_\_\_0\_\_\_\_ about improvements in blocking stolen mobile phones, industry experts are concerned Apple's new iPhone will lead to a jump in thefts.

Police say 800,000 Britons have their phones stolen every year but every mobile phone \_\_\_\_1\_\_\_\_ stolen in the UK is blocked within 24 hours.

But if they are rendered useless so quickly, why are so many still stolen and why are there serious concerns that the UK launch of the Apple iPhone could prompt a \_\_\_\_2\_\_\_\_ rise in thefts?

New technology to dodge security measures, along with mobiles becoming a currency in their own right in some countries are part of the answer. Along with the simple fact that thieves will always take \_\_\_\_3\_\_\_\_ "valuables" are around during a robbery.

The industry and police have worked hard to stop mobile thefts. Blocking, and other measures, having been credited for a 20% drop in such crime. But it's not a \_\_\_\_4\_\_\_\_ system and a phone can be unblocked, even though it is a criminal offence to do so in the UK.

A phone is blocked using its International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) number, which is unique to every phone manufactured. It disables the phone's SIM card.

Criminals unblock a phone by changing the IMEI number. Using a combination of hardware and software, they access the mobile's set up to change the IMEI. The going rate for unblocking is £10 to £50, depending on the model.

Because unblocking is not illegal in other countries stolen mobiles are now increasingly \_\_\_\_5\_\_\_\_ abroad. The National Mobile Phone Crime Unit (NMPCU) has uncovered cases of phones being stolen to order for export.

Often a person is not \_\_\_\_6\_\_\_\_ for their phone, taking it can be as simple as not wanting the victim to have the means to report the theft immediately. A huge number of stolen phones are not unblocked or sold on, they are just \_\_\_\_7\_\_\_\_."

What the industry can do is deter thieves by making it increasingly difficult and time-consuming to \_\_\_\_8\_\_\_\_ the stolen goods, says MICA.

Adapted from *BBC.co.uk*

- |                     |                 |               |                |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|
| 0. a) <b>boasts</b> | b) roars        | c) stakes     | d) yells       |
| 1. a) alleged       | b) reported     | c) revealed   | d) thought     |
| 2. a) harsh         | b) rough        | c) sharp      | d) tough       |
| 3. a) all           | b) any          | c) what       | d) whatever    |
| 4. a) defenceless   | b) disagreeable | c) fool-proof | d) wrongful    |
| 5. a) consigned     | b) forwarded    | c) shipped    | d) transmitted |
| 6. a) designed      | b) meant        | c) proposed   | d) targeted    |
| 7. a) cleared       | b) dumped       | c) fetched    | d) tipped      |
| 8. a) go through    | b) pass on      | c) put away   | d) set by      |

### Task 3b. (Estimated time: 15' / Marks: 8)

Fill in the gaps in the following text with one suitable word. 0 is the example.

#### MYLEENE KLASS REPLACES NICKY HAMBLETON-JONES

After five series presenting the hit Channel 4 show, Miss Hambleton-Jones has "left to pursue \_\_\_0\_\_\_ *other* interests" and will be succeeded by Myleene Klass, who is seven years her junior at 30. Miss Klass, who appears in the Marks & Spencer commercials, said: "I'm really pleased to \_\_\_1\_\_\_ over a show that has such a huge following. It's nice to be part of something that is positive and can change people's lives. It doesn't put people down in the process either. The programme will be slightly different this time and I hope to prove people don't have to resort \_\_\_2\_\_\_ surgery these days. I've personally experienced a lot of the feelings that the people of the programme \_\_\_3\_\_\_ through and feeling conscious of how I look. My best tip to look ten years younger is to look after your skin, hair and teeth. Plus get lots of sleep, but that's wishful \_\_\_4\_\_\_ on my part."

Andrew Jackson, editor of the show, said: "From her days as a pop star through to her modelling career, Myleene knows exactly \_\_\_5\_\_\_ it's like to have her face and body scrutinised so she'll be able to relate to the men and women featured in the programme." Of Miss Hambleton-Jones's contribution, he added: "Nicky has done a good job for the programme, working as part of a fantastic team that has helped make 10 Years Younger a success. We wish her all the very \_\_\_6\_\_\_ for future projects."

Miss Hambleton-Jones's agent said she had been discussing a further series with Channel 4. But he added: "After five series Nicky felt she wanted to leave the show and pursue other projects. The format was changing and the time was right to move \_\_\_7\_\_\_." The new series, which starts in the autumn, will be called *10 Years Younger: The Challenge*. In a twist to the format, two volunteers will be pitched against one \_\_\_8\_\_\_, one having cosmetic surgery and the other using more natural methods to beat ageing.

Adapted from *The Telegraph*