

CLASS C LYCEUM

OXFORD DISCOVER FUTURES 4

UNITS 3_4

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TASK 1: Questions 1-5

Read the text and answer the questions below. For each question, choose the correct answer A, B, C or D.



Competition or cooperation — which human instinct is stronger?

If you've played sport, been up for a promotion or watched debate programmes on TV, you'll have seen how competitive people can be. It is true that humans are, at heart, competitive beings. It is in our selfish genes to compete and to try and get ahead. However, psychologist Niki Harre believes our instinct to cooperate is stronger than our instinct to compete — if only we could reconnect with it.

But she says there is more to the story — as a simple example shows. "If you're on a bus and you see somebody who obviously needs a seat more than you do, you tend to give them the seat, that's in our impulse," says Dr Harre, from the University of Auckland. "So, I think we're caught in a Catch 22 situation- an exasperating situation in which one is trapped by contradictory conditions : a story that tells us that we're supposed to be selfish and competitive, and an instinct or impulse to be generous.

Kristopher Smith, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, has studied cooperation and competition. He believes humans stand out from other species because of "the extent to which we cooperate and help one another". He says things like recycling, donating blood and even voting show humans can be generous for no direct reward or outcome. "All of these things bear an individual cost to help strangers and unrelated individuals we may never see," Mr Smith says.

Mr Smith recently conducted a study on Tanzania's Hadza, one of the last hunter-gatherer groups in the world. To explore the Hadza's sharing culture, Mr Smith designed a public goods game. The Hadza don't use money, so Mr Smith filled straws with honey and then observed how much the food was shared. Mr Smith noticed that the amount of sharing depended on the general generosity of a particular group. "Competition was totally absent from the equation. They were adjusting their behaviour to match what the other members of the group were giving," Mr Smith said.

Mr Smith is confident that even the most uncooperative of people, who are "holding back their sharing instinct", can learn to change. What's driving that positivity? Ultimately, he says, "we find it essentially rewarding to help strangers". In the end,

despite our competitive nature, what stands out more is our exceptional capacity for generosity and mutual trust, those moments in which we act like no species that has ever come before us.

Adapted from: <https://www.abc.net.au/news>

1. According to the article, competing is a/an _____ human quality.

- A. learned
- B. inborn
- C. adaptable
- D. artificial

2. Being caught in a contradiction can cause a sense of _____ .

- A. indifference
- B. weakness
- C. frustration
- D. exhaustion

3. Professor Smith believes that _____ .

- A. altruism is a unique feature of human life
- B. human beings resemble animals in their behaviour
- C. selflessness is characteristic of animal behaviour
- D. human beings are motivated by a desire for incentives

4. Dr Smith's experiment with the Hazda _____ .

- A. emphasizes the inflexible nature of human cooperation
- B. found that the willingness to share depends more on the individual
- C. revealed the group's competitive nature
- D. showed that generosity and cooperation are contagious

5. The tone of the last paragraph is _____ .

- A. aggressive
- B. neutral
- C. optimistic
- D. pessimistic

TASK 2

Read the magazine article about three people (A-C) who write about the benefits of reading. Then answer questions 6-10.



A. Lucas

Have you ever read an amazing mystery novel, and solved the mystery yourself before finishing the book? If so, you were able to put critical and analytical thinking to work by taking note of all the details provided and sorting them out to determine “whodunnit”. That same ability to analyse details also comes in handy when it comes to critiquing the plot; determining whether it was a well-written piece, if the characters were properly developed, if the storyline ran smoothly, etc. Should you ever have an opportunity to discuss the book with others, you’ll be able to state your opinions clearly, as you’ve taken the time to really consider all the aspects involved. Apart from improving our critical thinking skills, reading books is also vital for learning new languages, as non-native speakers gain exposure to words used in context, which will increase their speaking and writing fluency.

B. Benjamin

In our internet-crazed world, attention is drawn in a million different directions at once as we multi-task through every day. In a single 5-minute span, the average person will divide their time between working on a task, checking emails, chatting with a couple of people (via gchat, skype, etc.), keeping an eye on twitter, monitoring their smartphone, and interacting with co-workers. This causes stress levels to rise, and lowers our productivity. When you read a book, all of your attention is focused on the story—the rest of the world just falls away, and you can immerse yourself in every fine detail you’re absorbing. Try reading for 15-20 minutes before work (i.e., on your morning commute, if you take public transit), and you’ll be surprised at how much more focused you are once you get to the office. In addition to the relaxation that accompanies reading a good book, it’s possible that the subject you read about can bring about inner peace. Reading can lower blood pressure and bring about an immense sense of calm, while reading self-help books helps people suffering from certain mood disorders and mild mental illnesses.

C. Oliver

When you read a book, you have to remember an assortment of characters, their backgrounds, ambitions, history, and nuances, as well as the various arcs and sub-plots that weave their way through every story. That’s a fair bit to remember, but brains are marvellous things and can remember these things with relative ease. Amazingly enough, every new memory creates new synapses (brain pathways) and strengthens existing ones, which helps you develop a more effective and efficient memory. Studies have also shown that reading helps you stay mentally alert which is key to slowing the progress of (or possibly even prevent) diseases like Alzheimer’s and Dementia.

Keeping your brain active and engaged prevents it from losing power. Apart from adults, reading is also important for children. Studies have shown that children who read do better at all subjects, all the way through school.

Adapted from: <https://www.lifehack.org/articles/lifestyle/10-benefits-reading-why-you-should-read-everyday.html>

Who says that reading _____ ?	
6. helps people concentrate better	
7. improves one's ability to think clearly and rationally	
8. boosts our recall abilities	
9. promotes vocabulary growth and improves fluency	
10. enhances academic performance	

TASK 3- Questions 11-17

Read the article about J. K. Rowling and answer the following questions.

FROM RAGS TO RICHES

JK Rowling has lived a true rags-to-riches story. The writer of the famous Harry Potter stories about a young wizard, his friends and their journey through Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, always wanted to be an author but it would take years of perseverance to become the success she is today.



Born in Gloucestershire in July 1965, Joanne Rowling enjoyed writing even at primary school and recalled writing a story when she was only six about a rabbit called Rabbit, who caught measles. She continued to write stories but had little success until she was thirty. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* helped her go off the charts.

It actually took a year for her agent Christopher Little to find a publisher. Lots of them turned it down. Then in June 1997 Bloomsbury published *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* under the name J.K. Rowling. She used the initials at the publisher's request, as they said it would make the books more appealing to her target audience of young boys.

What is quite extraordinary about J.K. Rowling is that she is the first author in history to have her net worth valued at \$1 billion, yet prior to her first Harry Potter book being published, she lived a very ordinary lifestyle, much of which was spent in relative poverty. She was an unemployed single mum, who had to rely on government benefits.

After graduating from university, Rowling did odd jobs to help her pay the bills, including working as a waitress, a bilingual secretary and researcher at Amnesty International's London offices. She then moved to Portugal where she got married and had her daughter, Jessica. After her marriage ended in divorce, Rowling moved to Edinburgh with her daughter to live near her younger sister.

While struggling to support her daughter Jessica and herself on welfare, Rowling worked on her first book in the *Harry Potter* series. The idea for the book reportedly occurred to her while she was traveling on a train from Manchester to London in 1990. She had plenty of ideas and would jot them down on scraps of paper whenever they came to her. However, it was to be a further seven years before her first book was finally published.

Just 24 years after writing her first novel, she is now a billionaire at the age of 56. However, she has never forgotten her humble roots and gives much of her money to charities, including those that support people living in poverty. Last year, for example, JK Rowling donated €1million to help homeless people and those affected by domestic abuse during the coronavirus pandemic.

JK Rowling's story just goes to prove that with a lot of hard work and determination, we all have the power to make our dreams come true. She went from being a jobless single mother living off unemployment benefits to one of the bestselling authors of all time. But it didn't happen overnight. She faced rejection and constantly strived for success. She worked hard at her craft before anyone noticed her. That practice, along with strengthening herself against rejection, was what made her work unforgettable.

The biggest lesson one can learn from J.K Rowling is to keep trying, believing, and acting on your dreams. In her own words: "It is impossible to live without failing at something, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all - in which case, you fail by default."

Adapted from: <https://www.headspacegroup.co.uk/from-secretary-to-billionaire->

11. What is the storyline across J. K. Rowling's books?

12. Which Harry Potter book made her extremely successful as a writer?

13. Why does she use her initials instead of her full name?

14. What is unique about J.K. Rowling?

15. What did J. K. Rowling do to make ends meet? Give two details.

16. Where did she get the inspiration for her Harry Potter books?

17. What does the article tells us about J. K. Rowling's character. Give three details.

TASK 4 Question 18

Read the following article about competition.

Write a summary about the advantages of healthy competition. Your summary should be about 100 words long (and no more than 120 words long).

You should use your own words as far as possible.



Why Healthy Competition Is Good for Kids

Competition is a “dirty” word for some parents. Not only does it put too much pressure on children to be their best, they say, but if they do not measure up, it can also cause undue stress and leave kids feeling frustrated.

If a competition does not provide kids with a goal that is attainable for everyone, the activity becomes unbalanced, with some jumping ahead and others ending up left in the dust. This is the kind of competition that will lead to anxiety and a diminished desire to participate in related activities.

Experts in child development point out that for children, a little healthy competition can be good. Once children realize that competition is not a scary thing, they can take risks. Not rash physical risks, but ‘risk’ as in testing the boundaries of what they are capable of. They can develop the confidence to do things that are initially out of their comfort zone.

Also, self-esteem cannot be handed to kids; they have to earn it. Competition is one way kids gain self-esteem. Healthy competition helps young people learn to ‘be themselves’. When appropriately presented, it can teach kids to question limiting presumptions they might have picked up and come to view themselves and their potential in a new way.

Children will also learn how to commit to important events by being involved in competitions through things like weekly training schedules. Organized competitions

teach kids how to be disciplined during practice, how to focus on the task, and how to have patience.

Researchers have also found that taking part in healthy competition can translate into better test results at school as children are also more likely to be active, hardworking students, and better future workers.

Winning is great but forgetting others' feelings can quickly create a situation where a child is perceived as unkind. Healthy competition means being a good friend and supportive of others, even if they lost. Children learn new life lessons about being a good loser or winner, and thus develop empathy.

Healthy competition also inspires students to do their best. When they compete, they will strive to do more than is required. This prepares them for future situations of all kinds, whether it's applying for college or seeking a promotion.

Aside from preparing children for adult life, competitive activities also help them develop important skills like perseverance. Children learn how important it is to keep trying to achieve something in spite of difficulties.

Falling short of winning the top prize isn't easy for anyone, but parents and teachers you have the power to help children think positively about competition, even when things don't go to plan. Try to be there to support children through their challenges and regularly reinforce the message that it's okay to lose as long as they are putting forth an effort and learning from the experience.

Adapted from: <https://integrityop.com/why-healthy-competition>

TASK 5: Question 19

You recently took part in a bizarre competition. Write an email to your best friend about it. In your email, you should:

- explain what made the competition bizarre
- say what you did there
- describe how you felt



TASK 6- Question 20

You have seen an advertisement in your school magazine inviting readers to send in articles about the value of reading. The article is entitled "Many believe that reading books is a waste of time since we can learn everything we want from watching television." To what extent do you agree or disagree?



Your article should be between 150-200 words long.

Here are two comments from other students in your class.

When a character is described in a book as tall with brown hair, a reader creates his/ her own picture. TV takes all that imagination away.

Reading books is good, but watching TV makes it easier for us to gather information faster.