

Sample Test – B2 English

1. READING

Part 1 – Matching

You are going to read an article about a psychology test carried out on very young children. For questions 1-10, choose from the sections (A-D). You may choose the sections more than once.

In which section does the writer mention

1. How a child's background can affect behaviour?
2. that the results of Mischel's long-term research were surprising?
3. Reasons for questioning the results of the original experiment?
4. Claims that training young children to resist temptation will have long-term benefits?
5. The proportion of very young children who were able to resist temptation?
6. An everyday example of the need for self-control?
7. That Mischel may have oversimplified the route to success in life?
8. That Mischel's own life experience has influenced his work?
9. Strategies employed by participants during the test procedure?
10. Two major factors which affect everyone's ability to resist temptation?

The Marshmallow Test

A psychology experiment carried out with a group of pre-school children in California in 1968 led to the development of ideas that are still relevant today.

A

In 1968, Walter Mischel set a challenge for a group of children aged three to five at the nursery school his daughters attended in California. A researcher offered each of them a marshmallow and then left them alone in the room. If they could resist eating the colourful sweet until the researcher returned up to 15 minutes later, they would be given a second sweet. Some children ate the marshmallow straight away, but most would engage in unintentionally comic attempts to resist temptation. They looked all around the room to avoid seeing the sweet, covered their eyes, wiggled around in their seats or sang to themselves. They pulled funny faces, played with their hair, picked up the marshmallow and just pretended to take a bite. They sniffed it, pushed it away from them or covered it up. If two children were doing the experiment together, they engaged in a conversation about how they could work together to reach the goal of doubling their pleasure. About a third of the children, the researchers reported, managed to wait long enough to get the second treat.

B

What Mischel, a clinical psychologist, wanted was to understand how children learned to deal with temptation. Over the following years, the group of children remained friends. When

Mischel chatted to his daughters about their former classmates, he began to notice an interesting pattern: the children who had exhibited the most restraint in the ‘marshmallow test’ were doing better in life than their peers. He decided to investigate further. For more than 40 years, Mischel followed the lives of the nursery students. His findings were extraordinary. It turns out that being able to resist a treat at the age of five is a strong predictor of success in life: you are more likely to perform well at school and develop self-confidence and less likely to become obese, develop addictions or get divorced.

C

Mischel still teaches psychology at Columbia University and has just written *The Marshmallow Test*, a book summing up half a century of research. When Mischel was young, his family was forced to move from a comfortable life in Austria to the US. They settled in Brooklyn, where they opened a bargain shopping store. Business was never good and Mischel believes that moving from ‘upper middle class to extreme poverty’ shaped his outlook. He is concerned with trying to reduce the impact of deprivation on an individual’s life chances. The conclusion he draws from his marshmallow research is positive: some people may be naturally disciplined, but the ability to resist temptation is a skill that can also be taught. Teach children self-control early and you can improve their prospects.

D

However, no single characteristic – such as self-control – can explain success or failure. Some critics have pointed out that Mischel’s original subjects were themselves children of university professors and graduate students – not exactly a representative sample. Other scientists noted that variations in home environment could account for differences: stable homes and one-child families encourage self-control, whereas in less stable homes and those with many children, if you don’t grab a marshmallow now there won’t be any left in 15 minutes. Mischel answers these critics by noting that studies in a wide variety of schools found similar results. He acknowledges that the environment shapes our ability to resist temptation and observes that genetics plays a role too. But he still believes that the ability to resist temptation can be learnt and encouraged. I asked Mischel whether self-control comes easily to him. ‘Not at all,’ he said. ‘I have great difficulties in waiting. It’s still difficult for me to wait in a queue in the bank.’

Points	
10	

Part 2 – Multiple Choice

You are going to read an article about a list of books for teenage readers. For questions 1-6, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

World Book Day – the test teen reads

by Genny Haslett, 24, English literature teacher at Bathampton Secondary School

It is often suggested that teachers and librarians aren’t pushing secondary school readers towards titles that challenge them enough, and so the organisers of World Book Day have

announced a list which might provide some inspiration for anyone who's stuck for ideas. This list of popular books for young adults, voted for by 10,000 people across the UK, features a top 10 to 'shape and inspire' teenagers, and handle some of the challenges of adolescence.

All but one of the books have already been made into films, demonstrating that when a book makes it to the big screen, it often then acquires more readers thanks to the film's success. Of course, this isn't always the case, as with George Orwell's 1984, where the rather mediocre film does not compare so favourably with the book's ability to conjure up a dark vision of life in a police state.

James Bowen's *A Streetcat Named Bod*, published in 2012, is one of the few relatively contemporary books here. It's also certainly for me the least predictable member of the list, but its extended stay on the bestseller list earned it – and its author – a devoted following. It is the touching story of Bob, the cat who helped a homeless man called James get his life back on track. Bob sits on James's shoulder and sleeps at his feet while he plays the guitar on the street, and soon becomes the centre of attention. What makes the story particularly powerful is that it is based on author James Bowen's real life.

Also on the list are J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter books. In this case it's actually the whole series rather than one particular title that makes the shortlist. Perhaps the judges struggled to agree which one book to pick. For me, the books are rather more pre-teen than the rest of the books on the list, which are aimed at a more mature readership.

But Harry Potter is a special case: as Harry gets older in each successive book in the series, the stories do become more complex and darker. In a way, readers themselves grow up with Harry and his friends. Rowling asks some tough questions about standing up to authority, challenging 'normal' views and many other subjects close to teenage readers' hearts. This should get rid of the idea that the whole series is just for young kids. In actual fact, half of all Harry Potter readers are over the age of 35, but that's another story.

The list goes right back to the nineteenth century with Charlotte Bronte's great romance *Jane Eyre*, showing that some books never grow old, though the majority are twentieth-century works such as Anne Frank's heartbreaking wartime memoir *The Diary of a Young Girl*, which even now I find hard to get through without shedding tears. Personally, I would have swapped J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* for one of the many classics that didn't make the final selection, *Lord of the Flies* perhaps, William Golding's nightmare vision of schoolboys stuck on an island.

Of course there'll always be some choices we don't agree with, but that's what I think makes a list like this so fascinating. I've been using it with my class of 16-year-olds, and I got them to evaluate it and make other suggestions for what to include or how it could be changed. But what I hope can really make a lasting difference is if it stimulates them to try out writers on the list, perhaps ones they haven't come across before, and be introduced to new styles of writing.

1. What criticism does the writer make in the first paragraph?

- A World Book Day has been poorly organised.
 - B School librarians aren't working hard enough.
 - C Teenagers are reading books that are too easy.
 - D Teachers don't encourage pupils to read enough.
2. What point is made about books which are made into films?
- A The best books tend to be made into films.
 - B The film of a book makes more people read the book.
 - C Many people prefer to watch a film than read the book.
 - D It is useful to be able to compare the book and the film.
3. What does the writer suggest about A Streetcat Named Bob?
- A She is surprised that it is on the list.
 - B The book did not sell as well as it deserved to.
 - C It is the most recently published book on the list.
 - D It is the only autobiography on the list.
4. How does the writer justify the presence of the Harry Potter books on the list?
- A The books' fame can help the list get more attention.
 - B The later books in the series are more suitable for teenagers.
 - C Teenagers should read books that they will also enjoy as adults.
 - D It makes sense to have a whole series as well as individual books.
5. Which book does the writer feel shouldn't be on the list?
- A Jane Eyre
 - B The Diary of a Young Girl
 - C The Lord of the Rings
 - D Lord of the Flies
6. What does the writer intend to do?
- A be more fully developed in future
 - B prompt pupils to read more widely
 - C enable pupils to write more effectively
 - D provide a useful topic for discussion in class

Points	
6	

2. USE OF ENGLISH

Part 1 - Writing the missing word in gaps

For questions 1-9, read the text below and think of the word which best fits the gap. Use only **one** word in each gap.

Food preservation

Keeping food for long periods (1)..... time was historically a huge problem. This proved especially crucial (2)..... times when agricultural production (3)..... severely limited by weather or crop failure. People commonly used ice to keep food fresh but, of (4)....., ice itself melts relatively quickly. In 1859, an American, John Mason, invented a glass jar with a metal screw-on lid, creating a perfect seal and making (5)..... possible to preserve food that would previously not have remained edible. Mason's jar is still (6)..... use throughout the world.

An even (7)..... successful method for keeping food by canning it in metal containers was perfected between 1870 (8)..... 1920 by Englishman Bryan Donkin. This preserved food beautifully, though the early iron cans were expensive, heavy and difficult to open. A breakthrough came in the 1880s with the development of lighter materials (9)..... also enabled mass production of cans.

Points	
9	

Part 2 – Word Formation

For questions 1-9, read the text below. Use the word given in capitals to form a word that fits in the gap.

Advertising in schools

In certain countries, there has been rapid (1)..... (**GROW**) in the spending power of teenagers. Realising this, firms are aiming even more of their (2)..... (**PRODUCE**) at young people, and (3)..... (**INCREASE**) they are doing this by advertising directly in schools. These companies see children as the (4)..... (**CONSUME**) of the future, and hope that when they become adults they will maintain their (5)..... (**LOYAL**) to brands they first started buying in their youth.

As a result, many (6)..... (**MANUFACTURE**) are keen to supply equipment to schools, sponsor sports activities or provide students with kit that carries their logo. Other firms install machines selling snacks and drinks, and these are often highly (7)..... (**PROFIT**) for both the companies and the schools.

There is, however, considerable (8)..... (**AGREE**) about whether this is a good idea. Some claim these firms provide a useful service, but others argue that these machines encourage (9)..... (**HEALTH**) eating habits at a time when many doctors are concerned about the diet of the young.

Points	
9	

Part 3 - Multiple Choice Gaps

For questions 1-9, read the text below and decide which answer (A, B, C or D) best fits each gap.

Why you should read fiction

At school, the (1)..... majority of what we learn is factual. In history lessons we memorise names and dates; in science we have to cope (2)..... chemical formulas and complex equations; in maths it's all numbers and signs. It's only in language lessons where we may (3)..... fiction. Some people would argue that there's (4)..... point in reading something which is 'made up'. If this is the (5)....., why do language teachers encourage their students to look at anything (6)..... from dictionaries and reference materials?

It is because they are (7)..... of the benefits that reading brings. It isn't simply because reading fiction helps us (8)..... reality for a while and switch off from our everyday routines. Reading fiction also teaches us to see the world through other people's eyes. It (9)..... us to understand the feelings of others, making us more empathetic. Fiction, in other words, helps us be better friends.

- | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1 A vast | B wide | C far | D high |
| 2 A for | B on | C by | D with |
| 3 A come up | B come across | C come about | D come over |
| 4 A little | B slight | C minimal | D hardly |
| 5 A issue | B matter | C case | D point |
| 6 A except | B apart | C other | D beside |
| 7 A aware | B wise | C familiar | D sensitive |
| 8 A depart | B miss | C escape | D break |
| 9 A lets | B authorises | C makes | D enables |

Points	
9	

VOCABULARY

Part 1 - Complete the sentences with the phrases in the box.

cross your mind (that) have an eye for is a pain
it broke my heart lost track of time ~~to break the ice~~
was a piece of cake takes my breath away

1. On the first day of class we played a gameto break the ice..... .
2. This view of the ocean is so beautiful it
3. That exam, I should get 100%.
4. Sorry I'm late, I was reading a great book and I
5. I nearly cried at the end of the film, when the man left.
6. Did it they might be busy tonight?
7. My younger brother sometimes but he's funny too.

8. You what clothes look good together, are you interested in fashion?

Points	
8	

Part 2 – Choose the Correct Option

A: What are you reading?

B: A book called Am I Normal Yet? It deals with some very (1) complex issues / major rules / moving novels, such as mental health and feminism, but it's funny too. You should read it.

A: I don't know. I'm not that (2) keen about / keen in / keen on books about everyday stuff. I prefer science fiction. But, I was rather disappointed (3) with / at / for the last book I read. Despite a great (4) opening chapter / stunning illustration / moving novel, it turned out to have a very (5) minor character / predictable plot / stunning illustration. Perhaps it's time for a change.

B: I've nearly finished this and it's (6) so good a book / too good a book / such a good book that you should give it a go.

A: OK, I will. By the way, BTS have (7) toured the world / released a track / gone solo. Have you heard it?

B: Yes! It's brilliant.

A: I love it. We need to (8) go for / figure out / join in how we can get tickets to their next concert!

Points	
8	

Grammar

Part 1 - Multiple-choice

Choose the correct answer.

- Many accidents in the home could be ... if householders gave more thought to safety.
a) avoided b) excluded c) protected
- The sole child from the plane was nervous because he ... before.
a) hasn't flown b) didn't fly c) hadn't flown
- There's a bus ... ten minutes.
a) each b) every c) most
- Why were you so unfriendly ... her?
a) of b) for c) to
- The story was really boring. It was ... I've ever read.
a) the more boring story b) the most boring story c) most boring story
- The plane ... down at Budapest on its way to China.
a) visited b) touched c) landed

7. Smoking is a bad habit. Many people find difficult to ... it.
 a) break b) beat c) cough
8. It is a good idea to be ... dressed when we go for an interview.
 a) smartly b) clearly c) finely
9. What time ... on television?
 a) is news b) is the news c) are the news
10. The traffic lights ... to red.
 a) shone b) turned c) exchanged
11. The nurse ... a rare disease.
 a) caught b) took c) infected
12. I phoned him to make an early ... at the hairdresser's.
 a) order b) date c) appointment
13. It's late It's time ... home.
 a) going b) to go c) going
14. The pandemic began in China and from there it ... to Europe.
 a) carried b) spread c) spilled
15. I had to pay for the damage ... the other car.
 a) of b) on c) to
16. Brian ... in Italy for three years. Now he lives in Spain.
 a) has lived b) living c) had been living
17. We burst into loud
 a) laughter b) amusement c) smiles
18. This old hospital is going to be ... soon.
 a) pulled down b) run down c) laid out
19. I'm thinking ... a house.
 a) to buy b) of to buy c) of buying
20. I can't swim as well as
 a) he is b) him c) he can
21. The show was long, but there were two
 a) tests b) intervals c) gaps

Points	
21	

3. Writing

Write an essay using all the notes and give reasons for your point of view (between 150 and 180 words).

Every country in the world has problems with pollution and damage to the environment. Do you think these problems can be solved?

2 at/during/in	2 products	2 D
3 was/became	3 increasingly	3 B
4 course	4 consumers	4 A
5 it	5 loyalty	5 C
6 in	6 manufacturers	6 B
7 more	7 profitable	7 A
8 and	8 disagreement	8 C
9 which/that	9 unhealthy	9 D

3. Vocabulary

Part 1	Part 2
2 takes my breath away	2 keen on
3 was a piece of cake	3 with
4 lost track of time	4 opening chapter
5 it broke my heart	5 predictable plot
6 cross your mind (that)	6 such a good book
7 is a pain	7 released a new track
8 have an eye for	8 figure out

4. Grammar

1 a 2 c 3 b 4 c 5 b 6 b 7 a 8 a 9 b 10 b 11 a
12 c 13 b 14 b 15 c 16 a 17 a 18 a 19 c 20 b 21 b

5. Writing

Essay writing tips:

An essay can be organised in different ways, but it is useful to **write one idea in one paragraph** and add a short **introduction** and **conclusion**.

1. Plan your essay before you write.
2. Make sure you know how to comment on all the points that are asked.
3. Invent information if you don't have any ideas.
4. Divide the essay into paragraphs – put one answer in one paragraph.
5. Use advanced vocabulary when you can and formal language.

Introduction Present the essay topic in your own words.
1st body paragraph Comment on the first point
2nd body paragraph Comment on the second point
3rd body paragraph Comment on the third point (your idea)
Conclusion

Give final opinion

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