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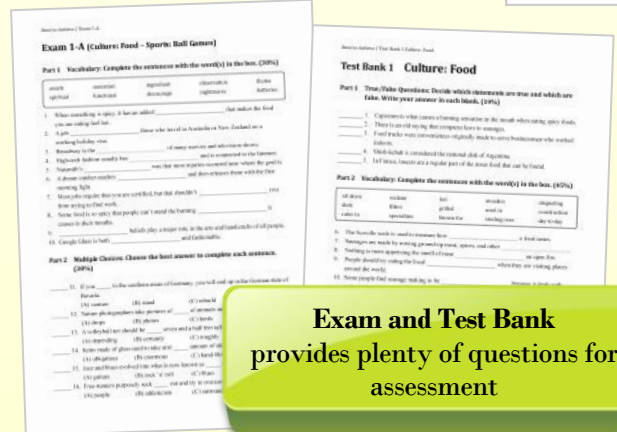
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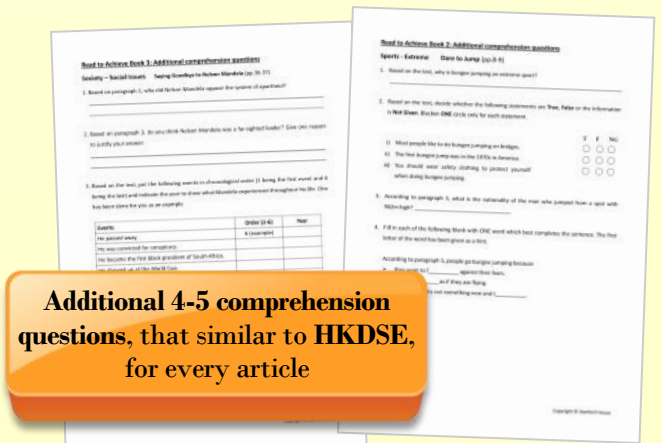


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- The Power of the YouTuber (Society: Business)
- The Food Delivery Boom (Society: Trend)
- Dealing with an Aging Population (Society: Social Issues)
- Will Streaming Videos Doom the Movie Theaters? (Society: Media)
- A Light Show in the Night Sky (Culture: Art)
- Moscow's Underground Art Museums (Culture: Travel)
- An Awe-Inspiring Bridge (Culture: Architecture)
- Better Living through Smart Homes (Science: Application)
- Air Fryer Magic (Science: Application)
- Military Drones: Changing the Face of Conflict (Science: Military)
- How 5G Networks Will Change the World (Science: Technology)
- The Internet of Things (Science: Technology)
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Will Streaming Videos Doom the Movie Theaters?

In the past, movies would make their first run by showing in movie theaters throughout the world. People would flock to the theaters to see the latest blockbuster films, and the production companies would reap their first wave of profits from sales at the ticket box offices. Later, after the popularity of the films in theaters began to **wane**, the movies would

- 5 be released on VHS tapes, then later on DVDs and Blu-ray discs. Today, many of these hardcopy devices are no longer required at all, as streaming services such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and HBO allow people to watch movies without going to a movie rental store. However, people still had to wait until the theater run was complete before the movies were released on these movie-streaming websites.
- 10 While this has been the case for many decades now, a major change took place in December 2020. It was at this time that Warner Brothers and HBO, two major film production companies, both announced that their entire 2021 lineup of films would not go to movie theaters first. Instead, they could be streamed from home while they were also still being shown in theaters. This was a major change, and it sent shockwaves through theater owners everywhere.
- 15 There are serious questions that could be asked about this change, particularly because it came about during a global pandemic. Due to Covid-19, businesses throughout the world were closed, and this included the majority of movie theaters. While these business closures were taking place, people were also sheltering at home to avoid catching the deadly virus. If there were ever a time when streaming video entertainment was in demand, it was during the pandemic.
- 20 The question is what will happen over the next few years after the pandemic subsides. As it once again becomes safe to **congregate** in large groups, will people once again venture out to movie theaters in order to get the collective experience of watching a film with a large group of people? Or will they opt for the cheaper, more convenient choice of staying home and watching a film on their own televisions? The changes in behavior that were caused by
- 25 the pandemic could prove to be a trend that is hard to reverse.

Although it is too soon to definitively say what will happen, there is no doubt at all that streaming services like Netflix have seriously **disrupted** the film industry. Whether theaters will be able to coexist with on-demand services that release the same films simultaneously is definitely a cause for concern.



Reading Comprehension

Choose the correct answer for each question.

1. What was typical behavior in the past for people who wanted to watch movies?
 - (A) People would buy the latest DVDs as soon as they came out.
 - (B) Rental companies would get flocks of people in their stores.
 - (C) Large groups of people would go to theaters to see the films.
 - (D) People would sign in to Netflix or Amazon Prime Video.
2. What can be inferred from this article?
 - (A) Movie theaters cost too much money to run.
 - (B) Most people find traveling to theaters to be a major inconvenience.
 - (C) The pandemic helped increase demand for in-home entertainment.
 - (D) Most people still use DVD and Blu-ray players.
3. What word or phrase would best replace the word “wane” in the third sentence of the first paragraph?
 - (A) Pick up
 - (B) Die down
 - (C) Turn out
 - (D) Flip over
4. What is predicted in this article?
 - (A) DVD players will make a comeback.
 - (B) The pandemic will slowly go away.
 - (C) The video streaming companies will have more competition.
 - (D) The movie industry will go out of business.
5. What do movie theaters provide that in-home movie viewing does not?
 - (A) The ability to see old films that are re-released.
 - (B) The ability to shelter from a deadly virus.
 - (C) The ability to have a collective experience when viewing a film.
 - (D) The ability to send shockwaves through theater owners.
6. Which of the following statements is NOT true?
 - (A) The Covid-19 pandemic changed peoples’ behavior.
 - (B) Warner Brothers is a film production company.
 - (C) The first wave of profits traditionally came from DVD sales.
 - (D) Streaming a video does not require going to a movie rental store.



Video streaming services



Culture: Arts

A Light Show in the Night Sky

Lights in the sky have always fascinated people and filled them with wonder. From the ancients trying to understand what lightning was or why the stars lit up the night, something about these lights delivered a feeling of awe. Zoom forward in time and the invention of fireworks, and the man-made lights in the sky added an entirely new **dimension** to watching a show in the sky.

Fireworks was invented hundreds of years ago and they have been used for celebrations ever since. However, in our computer age, we have created a new type of show that revolves around electric light emitted from small, unmanned flying vehicles called drones. When these drones light up the night sky, they will bring new excitement to the crowds. Additionally, they can be reused and do not cause air and noise pollution compared to traditional fireworks.

The amazing thing about drones is that they are programmable. They can recreate many images in the sky depending on the flight commands given to them. For example, a single drone can be programmed to fly in a circle with a blue light on. From the ground, it would simply look like a light going around in a circle. However, what would the effect be like if 2,000 drones were flown up into the night sky **simultaneously**? The effect turns out to be nothing short of amazing.

The best way to think of a drone show is by thinking of a marching band on a playing field. The band marches and makes formations that require precise timing and coordination. Just like how each person in the marching band knows which other musicians are nearby and what moves they should make, the drones do the same thing.

The drones making light formations in the sky aren't just programmed to fly a simple pattern. Instead, all of the drones are actually communicating with each other. They are constantly adjusting speed, altitude, and distance from the other drones around them. From the ground, viewers don't really see a single drone. Instead, they see the breathtaking, cumulative effect of them.

As part of the show for the 2019 New Year's Eve celebration in Shanghai, 2,000 drones took flight over the Huangpu River. Flying together, they first formed images of a globe. Following this, they created an image of a man running slowly in the sky. Finally, they created a countdown to the New Year, at which point the drones spelled out 2020 in the sky while **simulating** fireworks going off. The drone show ended with Chinese characters, translated to "dream pursuit" slowly making their way across the sky.

Will drone shows eventually take the place of fireworks? Probably not, but they're certain to become more and more popular in the future.

Reading Comprehension

Choose the correct answer for each question.

1. What do "ancients" refer to in the first paragraph?
 - (A) Old ways of doing things
 - (B) What things looked like in the past
 - (C) People who came thousands of years before us
 - (D) Very old technology that is no longer used
2. What is given as an example to help readers understand how drones work together?
 - (A) A display of fireworks
 - (B) How lightning lights up the sky
 - (C) A light circling in the sky
 - (D) A marching band
3. Which of the following was not an image produced by drones for the Shanghai New Year's Eve celebration?
 - (A) "2020"
 - (B) Chinese characters that meant "dream pursuit"
 - (C) A running man
 - (D) "Happy New Year"
4. The images produced by a large group of drones are the result of seeing their _____ effect.
 - (A) constant
 - (B) cumulative
 - (C) communication
 - (D) character
5. What is mentioned as being unlikely to happen?
 - (A) More drone shows will take place in the future.
 - (B) People will purchase drones as their price continues to drop.
 - (C) Seeing lighted images in the sky will become more common.
 - (D) Drones will eventually replace all fireworks.
6. What could be used to replace the word "emitted" in the second sentence of the second paragraph?
 - (A) Put on
 - (B) Set up
 - (C) Taken out
 - (D) Given off

5G

Science: Technology

Track 073

How 5G Networks Will Change the World

There is a lot of hype about how 5G networks will change the world. To begin with, what is 5G, and just how will it change things?

When talking about 5G, it simply stands for fifth generation mobile networks. The original analog technology, which was the first generation, became available to consumers in the 1980s. These networks became digital in the second generation, and the third generation brought mobile data usage. The fourth generation introduced mobile broadband, and today the fifth generation is unfolding.

What makes 5G so much better than all of the previous generations? To begin with, it is best to compare it to the fourth-generation mobile networks. 5G is much faster than 4G, and it has much greater capacity. To put this in perspective, the fastest rate of data transfer on a 4G network is about 300 Mbps, although that maximum can only be reached in laboratory settings. In the real world, most people experience data transfer speeds of about 100 Mbps. For 5G networks, the maximum rate is nearly 20 Gbps, which is 100 times faster than 4G!

This change makes many things possible. To begin with, it allows factories, farms, homes, and many other places to fully utilize the “internet of things” (IoT). The internet of things means that all sorts of devices can have a function and provide data. 5G allows all of the data from these devices to be processed in real time over the network.

For consumers who are interested in virtual reality (VR), 5G will bring it a step further. 5G allows for extreme reality (XR), where users will be able to visit environments virtually, yet without the time lag that often makes these experiences disorienting. It will also let consumers fully embrace IoT, in which devices down to the smallest lightbulbs in their houses can send data to the network.

One area that is poised to see a massive benefit from 5G is the healthcare industry, and telemedicine in particular. This type of treatment allows doctors to visit with patients even though they are far apart. Additionally, patients who are far away can be connected to all sorts of health monitoring devices, and doctors and nurses are able to get all the data from these devices remotely and in real time. Surgeons will even be able to use XR technology to remotely operate on patients. The surgeon's hands will be performing the surgery from far away, and special medical robots will follow the exact moves and operate on the patient.

The possibilities that 5G networks offers are seemingly limitless. It will change the world by allowing such a great advance in speed and capacity that practically everything around us can become connected. It will be an amazing new world to behold.

Reading Comprehension

Choose the correct answer for each question.

1. How is 5G defined?
 - (A) As the fifth generation of analog technology
 - (B) As being able to transfer 5Gb of data
 - (C) As fifth generation mobile networks
 - (D) As a new generation of virtual reality
2. Which technology is mentioned specifically for people who do surgery?
 - (A) VR technology
 - (B) IoT technology
 - (C) XR technology
 - (D) 5Gb technology
3. What is a problem with VR and XR technology that 5G networks solves?
 - (A) They remove the time lag.
 - (B) They enhance the graphics.
 - (C) They make it much less expensive.
 - (D) They add sound to the experience.
4. Where were speeds of 300 Mbps reached for 4G networks?
 - (A) It is common in the real world.
 - (B) Only in laboratory settings
 - (C) Mostly in factories and farms
 - (D) Only in people's homes
5. What are devices that are part of IoT able to do?
 - (A) Store information
 - (B) Run constantly
 - (C) Function faster
 - (D) Provide data
6. How many times faster than 4G is 5G?
 - (A) Four times faster
 - (B) 20 times faster
 - (C) 100 times faster
 - (D) 300 times faster

Sports: Running

Track 050

Serious Long-Distance Running

Some people do not believe that the options offered in regular running events allow them to truly show off their athletic ability. The people who think this way are elite athletes who have endurance that is beyond that of other serious runners. These are the people who have the **guts** to take on ultramarathons, and they are seriously hardcore.

5 Marathons are hard, no doubt about it. People are known to **collapse** at the finish lines due to **exhaustion**. However, ultramarathons are defined as running races that are longer than the marathon's 42.195 kilometers.

Although they take on different forms and have different rules, all ultramarathons have the ability of scaring off even the most seasoned athletes simply because of their length and
10 time. Some ultramarathons are created with simple round numbers of 50 or 100 kilometers. In the United States, there are races that use 50 or 100 miles, which are much longer than kilometers.

The races are sometimes run on the road; however, there are competitions that put runners on trails through forests or up over mountains. Some of the competitions take place in the
15 desert or up at very high altitudes. These ultramarathons push the athletes to their physical and mental limits.

To keep the runners safe during the ultramarathons, there must be a lot of preparation. Water, food, and first aid stations must be placed in regular intervals along the course. In some instances, runners are even monitored and forced to drink enough water before
20 continuing on. Additionally, if medical staff at checkpoints deem an athlete unfit to continue the race due to any number of reasons, they can force a runner out of it. When people run ultramarathons, sometimes their lives get put on the line.

Reading Comprehension

Choose the correct answer for each question.

1. According to this article, what are runners known to do at finish lines of marathons?
 - (A) Cheer
 - (B) Jump
 - (C) Drink
 - (D) Collapse
2. Which of the following lengths would NOT qualify as an ultramarathon?
 - (A) 35 kilometers
 - (B) 45 kilometers
 - (C) 50 kilometers
 - (D) 100 kilometers
3. What are runners pushed to in an ultramarathon?
 - (A) To quit and try again another time
 - (B) To rest and finish up a race later
 - (C) To physical and mental limits
 - (D) To cheat in order to win
4. Who can deem an ultramarathon runner not suitable to continue a race?
 - (A) Other runners
 - (B) Medical staff
 - (C) Race organizers
 - (D) Spectators
5. Which type of area is NOT mentioned as a spot where ultramarathons take place?
 - (A) A desert
 - (B) A mountain
 - (C) A forest
 - (D) A frozen lake
6. What must people have in order to run ultramarathons according to this article?
 - (A) Guts
 - (B) Sponsors
 - (C) Money
 - (D) A partner

Scan & Listen



Ultramarathons





Science: Technology

Track 063

The World of VR Technology

Virtual reality (VR) technology has come a long way in recent years. VR is technology that lets you feel like you are in **another** place, or even another time. Often, this involves wearing something known as a headset. The headset flashes footage or computer animation of another place in front of your eyes. Sounds from that place are broadcast in your ears. It is enough to make you think that you are really there, rather than where you actually are.

One of the biggest names in the world of VR tech is the Oculus Rift. It is a VR headset that can be used for gaming, as well as for other things. Not surprisingly, however, playing VR video games are the big attraction. Many of these games simulate experiences that are real or imagined, such as driving a race car, or fighting monsters or soldiers. The number of people using VR headsets to play these sorts of games online is rapidly rising. In June of 2018, it was announced that the number of players using VR headsets on Steam, a popular online game platform, was up 160 percent from the previous year. At that time, it was **believed** that just over 600,000 active Steam users had VR headsets.

Video games aren't the only use for VR tech, however. Those who are training to be **doctors** can use VR technology to train at a low cost, and without the danger of hurting any patients. Astronauts training for the conditions of space also use VR tech, as do student pilots learning how to fly an airplane. Soldiers now train using VR technology as well, allowing them to learn in a safe environment. As the years go on, surely people will find more and more uses for this great technology.

Reading Comprehension

Choose the correct answer for each question.

1. What does VR technology do?
 - (A) It just lets people play video games.
 - (B) It helps you travel more easily.
 - (C) It makes you feel like you're somewhere else.
 - (D) It makes flying more convenient.
2. What does most VR video games do?
 - (A) They let astronauts train safely.
 - (B) They help people become soldiers.
 - (C) They train people to become doctors.
 - (D) They simulate certain experiences.
3. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as a job that VR technology can help people train for?
 - (A) Doctor
 - (B) Soldier
 - (C) Teacher
 - (D) Astronaut
4. What is true about the number of people using VR headsets for gaming?
 - (A) It is rising quickly.
 - (B) It is staying the same.
 - (C) It is rapidly falling.
 - (D) It is still very low.
5. Why is VR technology used to train people in certain kinds of jobs?
 - (A) Because those jobs have very low pay
 - (B) Because those jobs are easy to train for
 - (C) Because the cost is much higher
 - (D) Because it can help them do so safely
6. What is the main idea of this article?
 - (A) VR technology is still in its early stages.
 - (B) VR technology has many good uses.
 - (C) VR technology needs a lot of improvement.
 - (D) VR technology has mostly negative effects.



Scan & Listen



VR technology



Sports: People Track 014

The Cycling Pride of Hong Kong

Often, it is the harshest **circumstances** that give birth to the greatest champions. Lee Wai Sze, also known as Sarah Lee, is living proof of that. She was born in Hong Kong in May of 1987. Growing up, her parents were quite poor. She also suffered from a disease that lowered her amount of red blood cells, limiting her body's ability to pump oxygen. None of this, however, would stand in Lee's way.

Sarah's childhood was spent in public housing—a place where it can often seem that dreams are out of reach. However, in spite of her **medical** condition, Sarah excelled in school sports. Her specialty was running short distances such as the 100-meter dash and the 400-meter race. In her teens, she was spotted by the Hong Kong Sports Institute, a training center for Hong Kong's top athletes. She was invited to train there, and she switched her specialty to cycling. By 2004, still in her teens, Sarah was already a full-time cyclist.

The hardships, though, were not quite over. In 2006, while training for a race, Sarah swerved to avoid a stray dog on the road. She fell and broke her wrist. For a time, the injury **threatened** to take her out of cycling forever. But just a few years later, the world would see just how determined she was to succeed.

At the 2010 Asian Games, Sarah became the pride of Hong Kong when she won the gold medal in the 500-meter time trial track cycling event. She even set an Asian record. She took home a bronze medal from the games, too, and was later awarded a Medal of Honor from the Hong Kong government. Two years later, Sarah brought honor to Hong Kong when she won the city's first ever Olympic medal in cycling at the London Olympic Games. Since then, she hasn't slowed down, achieving medal finishes in events throughout Asia and around the world. From public housing to the Olympic podium, Sarah Lee has proven that with hard work, dreams really do come true.

Reading Comprehension

Choose the correct answer for each question.

1. What does the disease Sarah suffers from do?
 - (A) It makes it easier for her bones to break.
 - (B) It makes it difficult for her to pump oxygen.
 - (C) It makes her muscles ache all the time.
 - (D) It makes her thoughts move slowly.
2. When Sarah was a runner, what was her specialty?
 - (A) Long distances
 - (B) Short distances
 - (C) Marathons
 - (D) Medium distances
3. What happened to Sarah in 2006?
 - (A) She ran in her first race.
 - (B) She was honored by the government.
 - (C) She won a medal.
 - (D) She had an accident.
4. In what year did Sarah win Hong Kong's first Olympic medal in cycling?
 - (A) 2006
 - (B) 2008
 - (C) 2010
 - (D) 2012
5. What is the overall tone of this article?
 - (A) Hopeful
 - (B) Doubtful
 - (C) Sorrowful
 - (D) Careful
6. What has Sarah done since 2012 according to this article?
 - (A) She has retired from cycling.
 - (B) She has tried to help stray dogs.
 - (C) She has continued to win.
 - (D) She has worked for the government.



Scan & Listen



Olympic cycling





Reading Comprehension

Choose the correct answer for each question.

1. What is the main point of heritage protection?
 - (A) Showing your heritage to other people
 - (B) Using the Internet
 - (C) Keeping your heritage alive
 - (D) Making heritage disappear
2. What is the biggest part of heritage protection?
 - (A) Protecting old buildings
 - (B) Doing traditional dances
 - (C) Giving red envelopes
 - (D) Telling stories
3. Where does Mardi Gras take place?
 - (A) Japan
 - (B) Taiwan
 - (C) Canada
 - (D) The USA
4. What is happening to most countries?
 - (A) They are becoming the same.
 - (B) They are becoming more different.
 - (C) They are getting smaller.
 - (D) They are destroying old buildings.
5. What is the main point of the last paragraph?
 - (A) It's OK to forget traditional heritage.
 - (B) The world is changing, but it's happening very slowly.
 - (C) As the world changes, we have to remember our heritage.
 - (D) People should talk to their parents and grandparents a lot.
6. Which of the following is NOT an example of heritage protection?
 - (A) Making sure your kids speak your traditional language
 - (B) Protecting old buildings
 - (C) Teaching your kids about your heritage
 - (D) Drinking Starbucks and wearing Nikes



Scan & Listen



Society: Heritage Protection Track 032

What Is Heritage Protection?

Heritage is traditional beliefs, customs, and culture. We use the word “heritage” in many different ways. People talk about their family’s heritage, their city’s heritage, and their country’s heritage.

Here are some examples of heritage. During Chinese New Year, people in Taiwan give red envelopes. That is part of Taiwanese heritage. Every year in the American city New Orleans, there is a huge party called Mardi Gras. That is a part of New Orleans’ heritage. Heritage can also be more private and personal. If your family has a big dinner every Sunday night, that’s part of your family’s heritage.

Today, heritage is changing. The **Internet** connects people around the world. In many ways this is a good thing, because we can learn about the heritage of other countries, and we can show our own heritage to the world. However, some people worry that traditional heritage is disappearing. Think about it. In many ways, countries are becoming more and more alike. In just about every country around the world, you can find MacDonald’s, Nike shoes, Starbucks coffee, and American movies. Some people think this is a good change, and others don’t like it. You can decide whether or not you think it’s a good thing. However, almost everyone wants to protect their traditional heritage, and sometimes this is hard. For example, when a new MacDonald’s opens in your town, a traditional restaurant might have to close.

This is why heritage **protection** is so important. Heritage protection is a simple idea. It means keeping your country’s or your city’s heritage alive. People do this in many ways. The biggest part of heritage protection is probably preserving old buildings. A few other examples of heritage protection are making sure your children speak your traditional language, and teaching your heritage to children.

The world is changing very fast. This change brings a lot of good things. But as the world is changing, it is important to remember the heritage of our parents and our grandparents.

Heritage Protection Group

