1. READING COMPREHENSION

TEXT 1

Are any foods safe to eat anymore?

Food was once seen as a source of sustenance and pleasure. Today, the dinner table can instead begin to feel like a minefield. Worse still, the advice changes continually. As TV-cook Nigella Lawson recently put it: “You can guarantee that what people think will be good for you this year, they won’t next year.” This may be somewhat inevitable: evidence-based health advice should be constantly updated as new studies explore the nuances of what we eat and the effects the meals have on our bodies. But when the media exaggerate the results of a study without providing the context, it can lead to unnecessary fears that may, ironically, push you towards less healthy choices. We’ve tried to cut through the confusion by weighing up all the available evidence to date. You may be pleased to learn that many of your favourite foods are not the ticking time bomb you have been led to believe.

The food: Bacon

The fear: Processed meats are as dangerous as cigarettes.

The facts: While the World Health Organisation has announced overwhelming evidence that bacon (and other kinds of processed meat) can contribute to colorectal cancer, the real dangers are not quite as worrying as the subsequent headlines would have us believe. For every 100 people who stop eating bacon, only one will have avoided cancer. To put that in perspective, consider the figures for tobacco: for every 100 smokers who give up, 10-15 lives may be saved. The two are hardly comparable.

The food: Coffee

The fear: Our caffeine addiction will drive us to a heart attack.

The facts: There is very little evidence that a cup of coffee will send you to an early grave; in fact, the opposite may be true. In 2012, the New England Journal of Medicine reported on the health of 400,000 Americans over the course of 13 years. The scientists found that people who drank between three and six cups a day were around 10% less likely to die during the 13-year period, with lower rates of heart disease, stroke, diabetes and infections. A review in 2014 painted a similar picture: people who drank four cups a day were around 16% less likely to die at any one time. Note that these were only observational studies. Although they tried to account for other factors, there’s no way of knowing if the coffee itself was protecting the heart, or if there’s some other, hidden, explanation. Perhaps healthier people are just more likely to be drawn to coffee. But as “addictions” go, it’s pretty harmless. It’s probably not the elixir of life that some claim, but based on this evidence, you can at least savour that morning espresso with impunity.

*Sustenance*: Something (in this case, food) that keeps a person alive.

Choose the most suitable answer.

EXAMPLE:

0. According to the text, food used to be considered ______.
   a) an enjoyable experience.
   b) the origin of life.
   b) simply something necessary to stay alive.

1. According to the text, public opinion concerning food ______.
   a) is always wrong.
   b) is often contradictory.
   c) does not tend to change.

2. Health advice about food ________________.
   a) is often based on TV programs.
   b) removes all the pleasure that meals used to have.
   c) changes because of new data being found.

3. According to the text, which of the following statements is true?
   a) People always choose to eat food which is not healthy.
   b) TV programs invent the results of food experiments.
   c) Sometimes the outcome of a food study may not reflect all the truth.

4. The World Health Organisation ________________.
   a) has seen a link between processed meat and some types of cancer.
   b) has proved that eating bacon is very dangerous.
   c) has advised people to stop eating bacon.

5. According to the text, newspapers ____________.
   a) tend to exaggerate health news.
   b) try to prevent people from eating bacon.
   c) alter the figures related to colorectal cancer.

6. According to the text, smokers who ________________.
   a) eat bacon tend to develop a cancer.
   b) stop smoking have chances of surviving.
   c) stop eating bacon could save other people’s lives.

7. According to a study, people who are addicted to caffeine ____________.
   a) may live longer than people who do not drink coffee.
   b) do not tend to suffer from cancer.
   c) may develop a heart disease.

8. According to the text, which of the following statements is not true?
   a) People suffering from diabetes must not drink coffee.
   b) There is no link between drinking a lot of coffee and suffering a stroke.
   c) Eating too much processed meat might cause colorectal cancer.

9. Which of the following words is closer to the meaning of “hidden”, as used in the text?
   a) false   b) obvious   c) unseen
TEXT 2

The myth of Theseus and the Minotaur

The Minotaur was the son of Pasiphae, wife of King Minos of Crete. Queen Pasiphae slept with a bull sent by Zeus, and (0) gave birth to Minotaur, a creature half man – half bull. King Minos was embarrassed, but did not want to kill the Minotaur, so he hid the monster in the Labyrinth constructed (11) by Daedalus at the Palace of Knossos. According to the myth, Minos was imprisoning his enemies in the Labyrinth (12) so that the Minotaur could eat them. The labyrinth was (13) such a complicated construction that no one (14) could ever find the way out alive.

Son of Minos, Androgeus, went to Athens to participate to the Panathenaic Games, but he was killed during the Marathon by the bull. Minos was infuriated, and (15) demanded Aegeus the king of Athens to send seven men and women every year to the Minotaur. The third year, Theseus, son of Aegeus decided to be one of the seven young men that would go to Crete, in order to kill the Minotaur and end the human sacrifices to the monster. Theseus promised his father that he would put up white (16) sails coming back from Crete, allowing him to know in advance that he was coming back alive. The boat would return with black ones if Theseus was killed. Theseus announced to King Minos that he was going to kill the Monster, but Minos knew that even if he did manage to kill the Minotaur, Theseus would never be able to exit the Labyrinth. Theseus met Princess Ariadne, daughter of King Minos, who fell madly in love with him and decided to help Theseus. She gave him a thread and told him to unravel it as he would penetrate deeper and deeper into the Labyrinth, so that he knows the way out (17) so that he kills the monster. Theseus managed to kill the Minotaur and save the Athenians, and took Princess Ariadne with him and left Crete sailing (18) back to Athens.

Theseus’ boat stopped at Naxos and the Athenians had a long celebration dedicated to Theseus and Ariadne. After long hours of feasting and drinking, Ariadne fell asleep on the shore and didn’t enter the boat that sailed to Athens. Theseus figured out that Ariadne was not with them when it was too late and he was so (19) so that he forgot the promise made to his father and did not change the sails. A different version of the myth mentions that Theseus deliberately left Ariadne on Naxos.

King Aegeus saw the black sails and presumed his son was dead. He (20) threw himself to the waters, committing suicide and since then, this sea is called the Aegean Sea.


Choose the correct answer.

EXAMPLE:

0. a) give   b) gives   c) gave

11. a) by   b) for   c) to

12. a) for   b) in order to   c) so that

13. a) so   b) such   c) such a

14. a) could   b) must   c) was able

15. a) demanded   b) said   c) suggested
16. a) waves    b) sails    c) seals
17. a) when    b) where    c) which
18. a) currently    b) happily    c) hardly
19. a) embarrassed    b) painful    c) upset
20. a) dropped    b) jumped    c) offered

2. USE OF ENGLISH

Choose the correct answer.
EXAMPLE:
0. The map _________ I bought yesterday was not expensive.
a) what    b) where    c) that

21. I _________ my hand while I _________ my motorbike.
a) hurt/have been repairing    b) was hurting/repaired    c) hurt/was repairing

22. Phil _________ to Vincent unless he _________.
a) won’t talk/apologizes    b) wouldn’t talk/has apologized    c) won’t talk/would apologize

23. “I live in Boston”. Karen said that ________________.
a) she has lived in Boston.  
b) she lived in Boston.    c) she would live in Boston.

24. Shakespeare wrote Hamlet.
a) Hamlet was wrote by Shakespeare.  
b) Hamlet is written by Shakespeare.    c) Hamlet was written by Shakespeare.

25. I’ll never forget _________ the Prado museum when I was a teenager.
a) visit    b) visiting    c) to visit

3. COMPOSITIONS

Write two compositions about these topics following the guidelines provided (Also, remember to read the instructions above):

Task 1
Write a letter or an e-mail to a friend describing a book you enjoyed reading.
● Explain what the book was about.
● Tell him / her why you liked it so much.

Task 2
Write a for and against essay (pros and cons) discussing the advantages and disadvantages of going on an organized tour when traveling.
● Present your argument for and against the issue in two clear paragraphs.
● Use connectors to show the connection between your ideas.
● Include your opinion in the closing paragraph.