C1 Advanced Part 5

1 Choose the correct alternative.

Multiple-choice exam questions have a question with four **(a)** *options/distractors* (A, B, C and D). In these types of questions there will be **(b)** *distractors/choices*. These are answers which look correct, but are in fact **(c)** *options/incorrect*. Before making your final **(d)** *choice/option* for each question, make sure you read A, B C and D carefully to eliminate all the wrong answers.

2 Read the definitions and choose the correct word or phrase.

1 be too negative about what someone has said or done	**a** fit in (phr v)
2 be interpreted in the wrong way	**b** have a gift for (phr)
3 feel comfortable around people who are similar	**c** articulate (adj)
4 able to express feelings and thoughts easily	**d** leap out at (phr v)
5 be naturally good at something	**e** misunderstood (adj)
6 be immediately obvious to someone	**f** overcritical (adj)

Exam tip

In multiple-choice questions there are 'distractors'. These are options that might seem correct at first sight but are actually not the correct answer. Don't make your final choice until you have read the text carefully to identify and eliminate all the incorrect options.

3 Read the article and choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D).

Want a big brain? Learn a language!

Learning a language is beneficial to your brain. This is something we're often told and is why many school curriculums encourage students to carry on learning a language until they have a qualification in it. We're also told that the younger you start learning, the easier it will be. On the other hand, the later you start learning, the harder it will become. In actual fact, there are many benefits of learning a second language regardless of your age.

Let's start with some science. Language learning can actually increase your brain's size according to a study by some Swedish scientists. In the study, there were two groups. The first had a gift for language learning and were asked to learn a language over a short period of time. The second, a control group, stood out for their academic ability in cognitive science and medicine rather than languages. They were also required to study, but not at languages. When researchers looked into the results, seen in MRI scans, they found that the former group's brains had increased in size in certain areas. On top of this, within the first group, those who had brain growth in the areas responsible for language learning had developed better language skills than those whose brains had grown in other areas. Conversely, the control group's brain structure remained unchanged.

When you look at it from a brain health point of view, you cannot underestimate the positive effects language learning has. Dr Thomas Bak, a neuroscientist, makes a comparison between learning a language and going to the gym. For people who do sudoku, this is the equivalent of going to a gym and using one piece of equipment. Learning a language requires piecing together different parts of the brain. They all need to connect and work together. In this way, instead of using just one piece of equipment, you're using more like 20! As a result, people are able to give their brains a good work out and this kind of activity is thought to delay signs of dementia by as much as five years.

Then there's multitasking. Experiments carried out by Penn State University researchers indicate that people who can speak a second language have a greater ability to be cognitively flexible. Take a child who speaks two different languages and one who doesn't. The bilingual child may have to grasp, in a very short amount of time, what language they need to switch to in order to communicate with the person in front of them. This code-switching leads to better brain flexibility. Consequently, other parts of their lives can benefit. It's probable that a bilingual child is going to be better trained and therefore less stressed when they have to switch from one task to another. On the other hand, a monolingual speaker is more likely to be slower to jump from one thing to another and therefore, feel more under pressure.

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C1 Advanced Part 5 (continued)

When you learn a language, you acquire a lot more knowledge than simply being able to learn a different way of saying something or writing uncommon words down on paper. No language exists in isolation. You can pick up cultural understanding, different viewpoints, and an awareness of the incredible diversity there is in the world and its people. It will probably encourage you to travel more as well. By opening your mind to differences as well as understanding your own environment, you'll manage to have a greater tolerance of other people and why they behave in a way that is unfamiliar to you.

And back to those people who believe that age is a big factor in success at second-language learning. Well, this is partly true, but it probably isn't as significant as you might think. On the one hand, older adults would find it hard to keep up with children in a school situation when it comes to memorising new grammatical structures or recalling vocabulary. However, according to Ashley Chung-Fat-Yim, a post-doctoral researcher at Northwestern University, it's more a case of how you learn a language. Turn your mind to putting in a lot of practice and completely immersing yourself in it and you'll see positive results at any age.

In short, from both a mental and social point of view, there seems to be no good reason not to learn a language. Yes, you'll have moments when you feel fazed, baffled and bewildered. There will even be times when you struggle to get your words straight and come out with an inaccurate statement which is misinterpreted by the listener. But keep up with it. You'll be thankful you did one day.

1 The writer mentions age in the first paragraph to

A encourage younger people to learn foreign languages.

B support commonly-held beliefs about language learning.

C illustrate that language learning is good for both children and adults.

D explain why students have a better chance of taking language exams.

2 What does the Swedish experiment seem to prove?

A Language learning changes the brain physically.

B It is impossible to learn a language in a short space of time.

C The same brain activity was seen in the members of the second group.

D People who are good at science can't access the language part of their brains.

3 Dr Thomas Bak suggests that

A number puzzles don't help our brains at all.

B language learning can completely stop memory loss.

C brain function increases when we do physical exercise.

D language learning uses many areas of our brains.

4 What does the writer say about multitasking?

A It is stressful for bilingual speakers and monolingual speakers.

B Switching between languages is good practice for multitasking.

C Multitasking is all about practice, regardless of second language ability.

D Switching between tasks is something bilingual speakers get confused by.

5 What is the writer's main message about language learning in paragraph 5?

A It is best learnt through travel.

B It is key to understanding your own culture.

C It teaches us so much more than just a new language.

D It rarely leads to a better understanding of the world.

6 What does the phrase 'keep up with it' in the final paragraph mean?

A Continue to make mistakes.

B Don't give up learning a language.

C Apologise for saying the wrong thing.

D Don't stop socialising with different nationalities.

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C1 Advanced Part 4

1 Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

between • change • re-order • word • wrong

When you do sentence transformation activities, you have to use the **(a)** ..... given. If you don't use this or if you **(b)** ..... it, it will be marked **(c)** ..... However, you will probably need to change the other words in the sentence or **(d)** ..... them. Be careful to use **(e)** ..... three and six words.

2 Correct the words in bold in sentences 1–6.

1 He has always looked up **for** his mother.
2 I have no idea how they came up **in** that computer game.
3 Sorry, I'm having trouble getting my words **through**.
4 Sub-titling is usually part of the **after**-production process.
5 *Minari* is a **part**-biographical film by Lee Isaac Chung.
6 If you can talk **by** your problems, it usually makes things easier.

Exam tip

In sentence transformation exercises, remember to use the word given in your answer. You will probably have to change other words and re-order the sentence. Do not use too many words.

3 For questions 1–6, complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between three and six words, including the word given. Here is an example (0).

0 'You can do it!' my mum said.
ENCOURAGED

My mum encouraged me to do it.

1 Signing autographs is something that footballer hates.
STAND

That footballer ..... autographs.

2 I wanted to call my mum yesterday, but then I forgot.
REMEMBER

I didn't ..... yesterday.

3 When I'm in my history class I can't concentrate well.
MIND

My ..... in my history class.

4 That woman didn't react when she was told the news.
FAZED

That woman ..... news.

5 I was made to think buying the watch was a good idea by my friend.
PERSUADED

My friend ..... the watch.

6 We were unable to guess the ending of that book.
UNPREDICTABLE

That book had ..... according to the book club.

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