Reading Part 5 Multiple choice

1 Read this extract from a book. How optimistic do you think the author is about the future of humankind?

2 For questions 1–6, read the extract again and choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

1 The writer suggests in the first paragraph that agricultural development
A may need to be carried out on other planets.
B will one day be adequate to feed the world's population.
C has had both positive and negative effects.
D has played only a minor part in population growth.

2 When he states ‘To put it another way’ in line 11, the writer is
A suggesting an alternative.
B reinforcing an argument.
C refuting an explanation.
D expressing a different point of view.

3 In the second paragraph, the writer is casting doubt upon
A the principal cause of climate change.
B our understanding of the effect of burning fossil fuels.
C the unpredictability of weather patterns.
D our need for greener ways of regenerating energy.

4 What point does the writer make in the third paragraph?
A The recent destruction of rainforests was no worse than any others.
B More animals than plants are in danger of extinction in rainforests.
C The true value of the rainforests is yet to be discovered.
D The disappearance of forests is a relatively new phenomenon.

5 The writer uses the phrase ‘woeful litany’ in line 48 to illustrate
A the distressing nature of the list of problems facing the world.
B the length of the list of problems facing the world.
C the effect various problems are having on the world.
D the causes of the problems the world is facing.

6 In the last paragraph, the writer implies that
A all generations have wanted a better future for their children.
B the planet would never survive another population growth.
C in the future we will find new freedoms to replace those we have lost.
D under certain circumstances some continuation of our current lifestyle may be possible.
Since 1950, the global population has grown at up to a hundred times the speed it grew after the invention of agriculture, and ten thousand times as fast as it did before that. This is a great human achievement.

The huge increase in population in the last century, and continuing in this, however, is a problem caused by success – the success of vaccination and clean-water programmes, and of the ‘green revolution’ in agriculture. Without the latter, it has been estimated that mankind would have needed extra farmland the size of North America to feed itself. To put it another way, some two billion people are alive because of it.

Yet most observers believe so many billions of humans are too many for the planet to sustain indefinitely; we need too much water, we consume too much carbon-based energy, and we take over too much land to feed ourselves, for the biosphere to cope.

By far the best known problem in our world today is climate change. This is mainly caused by the burning of fossil fuels, which results in the production of greenhouse gas. This stops the planet cooling itself as efficiently as it needs to, thereby raising temperatures. By how much and exactly with what effect are unknown. An increase in ‘wild’ or unpredictable weather patterns may be one of the consequences.

Looking at possible projections, this is either a problem rather over-stated today and which can be dealt with by greener ways of regenerating energy; or it is an imminent catastrophe that could make this the last human century.

Then there are the problems of deforestation and the extinction of species. Humans have always destroyed forests, both because they wanted the wood and to expand their farmland. Northern Europe was once covered in trees. But the deforestation of the 20th century was particularly dramatic, removing perhaps half of the remaining total; and was concentrated in tropical areas. The importance of forests for maintaining the health of the atmosphere, and coping with the carbon problem, is now well understood. In addition, these rainforests contain a high proportion of endangered plant and animal species, which may in turn harbour many useful secrets for human survival. If, as many scientists predict, around 30 per cent of current species become extinct over the next century, then that would be a huge planetary event, another mistake by the human ape.

Two last problems must be added to this woeful litany. Overfishing and the acidification of the oceans are causing an environmental disaster that would be a worldwide scandal if we were able to see clearly below the waves; and it is a disaster affecting an important source of food. Add to this the atmospheric pollution in the megacities that increasingly dominate as human habitations (more than half of us now live in cities), which has caused a huge loss of life, albeit generally in the older and weaker. The historian J. R. McNeill estimates a 20th century toll from air pollution of up to forty million people, equivalent to the combined casualties of both world wars, or about the same as the 1918–19 flu pandemic. Like other problems, this was a ‘failure of success’, in this case caused by the arrival of cars, air travel and a lifestyle more materially rich; many of those affected by pollution have migrated from villages and small towns and cities, prepared to live in slums or shanty towns simply to have the chance to exploit the greater opportunities of urban life.

Today’s parents in the West are the first generation to worry that their children will live more meagre, if less wasteful, lives than they have. A world population of around today’s size, or bigger, is plausible; and a wide range of scientific fixes, such as those mentioned for tackling global warming, and genetically modified food, would help the planet cope. What is not plausible is the notion of a bigger population enjoying the new freedoms of car use, air travel and foods flown in from around the globe that many of us now enjoy.
Use of English

Part 3 Word formation

1 Read the text below quickly and decide which summary, a or b, is the most suitable.
   a. A short workout is better than no workout.
   b. A short workout is better than a long workout.

2 For questions 1–8, read the text again and use the words given in capitals to form a word for each gap.

A quick workout

For those with (0) insufficient time to work out in the gym, there is some good news. Fitness enthusiasts can effectively reduce their workout time by two-thirds, according to recent research. Gym (1) ___________ has soared in recent years, and doctors are hoping that these (2) ___________ will encourage more people to take up exercise.

The results suggest that it is not (3) ___________ to spend hours exercising when working out for a shorter time and more (4) ___________ achieves the same results. Participants were required to cut their exercise time but increase the difficulty of their workout. Those who exercised for the shorter time found that a significant (5) ___________ in body fat had occurred. Experts believe that this proves that a streamlined exercise programme is more (6) ___________ and less time-consuming.

Some (7) ___________ point out, however, that to achieve goals like these, you need a good level of fitness before tackling exercise of such (8) ___________.

3 Fill in the missing parts of speech in the table below.

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4 Write the words in brackets in the correct form in a–c.

a. Wait until you’ve heard both sides of the ........... (argue) before making a ........... (judge).

b. Today’s front page story contains ........... (drama) ........... (reveal) about the travel industry.

c. The storyline is very ........... (romance) and the book is ........... (exception) well written.

5 Look up the words not used in 4 in a dictionary. Write sentences to show at least two different meanings or uses of the words.
Use of English Part 1 Multiple-choice cloze

1 Read the text below, ignoring the gaps, to find out why the 'body clock' is important.

2 For questions 1–8, read the text again and decide which answer (A, B, C or D) best fits each gap.

Example
0 B

A FUTURE IN THE DARK

Many of us are working, travelling and shopping in hours that used to be (0) .......... for relaxation and sleep. But, according to scientists, we are no longer getting enough darkness in our lives. In fact, (1) .............. shows that a growing number of health and environmental problems are (2) ............ to a loss of darkness.

Life has evolved with a day/night cycle – without this, people experience an adverse impact on their immune systems. We are (3) .............. a conflict between what our mind wants, and what our internal body clock prepares us for. This biological clock is similar to the conductor of an orchestra, with the multiple rhythms of the body (4) ............ the orchestra sections.

The body clock is (5) .............. on the light/dark cycle and ensures that all our internal systems – temperature, alertness, blood pressure and so on – are working together. This is its sole (6) .............. . By moving to 24-hour living, and not taking into (7) .............. darkness, we are effectively throwing away the advantages of evolution, (8) .............. we admit it or not.

0 A conserved  B reserved  C upheld  D defended
1 A demonstration  B display  C research  D confirmation
2 A prone  B open  C due  D next
3 A creating  B contributing  C giving  D increasing
4 A describing  B corresponding  C expressing  D representing
5 A done  B based  C decided  D established
6 A reason  B project  C purpose  D desire
7 A interest  B importance  C detail  D account
8 A so that  B whether  C unless  D in case