This exam comprises **four questions**: 1. and 2. contain two subsections which you must answer in full; 3. contains only one section which you must answer; in 4., answer **only one** of the two subsections.

**Read the following text:**

If the statistics are to be believed, by the end of this sentence, I'll have lost most of you. Because according to some estimates, the average time spent on a webpage is 15 seconds.

Fifteen seconds. This world has apparently already so degraded our attention spans that we can't concentrate on anything for longer than it takes to tie a shoelace. As a result, webmasters worldwide have launched an emergency austerity programme, pruning, paring, compacting everything possible in a frantic attempt to spare our readers a few precious seconds.

Most online gurus caution against blogposts of more than 600 words; some insist that the ideal length is 200. Internet users, they cry, can't be bothered to scroll through long articles.

This fragmentation of information isn't confined to the Internet. In 1992, a professor at the University of California published research showing that the length of the average political catchphrase on American TV had dropped from 43 seconds in the 1968 presidential election to nine seconds in 1988. It now stands at just under eight seconds.

The most obvious casualty of this economy drive is the venerable paragraph.

Of course, different rules apply in different media. Paragraphs in newspapers have always been shorter than in novels and essays, chiefly because their pages are split into columns. With narrower margins, more frequent indentations are required to break up the daunting blocks of text. Furthermore, news stories – in some papers, at least – are supposed to be light on opinion, speculation and excessive description, restricting themselves to the facts and perhaps a little context and reaction, so there's less scope for discursion.

The Internet, meanwhile, has exerted further downward pressure on paragraph length. Reading on a laptop screen or phone is slower and more fatiguing, and it's harder to keep your place; inserting regular, clear breaks (complete lines rather than indentations) is one way to create a smoother reading experience.

So what is to stop us abandoning the paragraph and simply breaking after every sentence? Well, several things. Paragraphs allow us to group chunks of information together in coherent units. A long paragraph can be a reasoned discourse. Lots of short paragraphs create the impression of a series of unconnected slogans, with no obvious progression. Paragraphs also allow for variation of rhythm; as an expert says, "it's important to mix up your paragraph length for the same reason you mix up your sentence structure: to keep your reader's eyes from glazing over." It's all very well not putting off the reader with huge blocks of text, but after winning their attention, you ideally want to keep it.

**1. Answer the two subsections in this question. (2.5 points)**

**1.1. After reading the text, indicate whether the following statements are True (T), False (F) or the information is Not Given (NG). In true and false cases only, copy the part of the text which justifies your answer. (1.5 points)**

1. According to the text, the vast majority of people spend between 15 and 16 seconds on a webpage.
2. The people responsible for maintaining webpages are trying to keep information simple so that people don't close them before they can gather that information.
3. Currently, American politicians tend to utter short soundbites to catch the voters' attention.
4. The way different media organise paragraphs is always the same.
5. Newspapers tend to be relatively strict regarding who writes descriptive articles, as they are harder to follow.
6. The author of the article has a strong opinion in favour of keeping paragraphs as they used to be, that is, lengthy and invariable regarding pace.

**1.2. Find a synonym (S) or an antonym (A) in the text for each of the following words. (1 point)**

1.mean (as an adjective; S) 2. initiated (S) 3. raised (A) 4. possibility (S) 5. linked (A)

**2. Answer the two subsections in this question. (2.5 points)**

**2.1. Write a NEW sentence that has the same meaning as the given one. Use the word or expression in brackets. (1.5 points)**

1. The manager made him stay late. (*he*)
2. I have never tasted anything so delicious. (*It is*)
3. It's possible that she forgot the meeting. (*might*)
4. They had finished the work before we arrived. (*by*)
5. If I had known, I would have helped you. (*because*)
6. "Where do you live?", she asked me. (*I*)

**2.2. Answer the following questions about pronunciation. (1 point)**

1. Which of the following pairs of words are pronounced the same? feel/fill, put/pot, align/alone, male/mail, gone/gown.
2. In which of the following words does the stress fall on the third syllable? ridiculous, internet, platinum, understand, bookseller.
3. In which two words is/are the underlined letter/s pronounced the same as in "misses"? allowance, washes, volcanoes, judges, games.
4. In which word do we pronounce the letter "g" as in "glucose"? sing, foreign, agent, design, anguish.

**3. In this text, fill each one of the gaps with a word taken from the box below. Bear in mind that there are *five extra words* which you must leave out. Each word may be used only once. (2 points)**

Not long **1.** _____, getting your driver's **2.** _____ and owning a car were considered symbols of freedom and independence. For **3.** _____ teenagers, it was something to dream **4.** _____. However, in recent years, **5.** _____ people's attitudes toward cars have started to change. Nowadays, more teens prefer **6.** _____ public transport, bicycles, or ride-sharing apps like Uber or Bolt. One reason for this is the **7.** _____. Buying a car, paying for petrol, insurance, and maintenance can be very expensive — especially for students or part-time workers. Many young people would **8.** _____ spend their money on travel, technology, or social activities.

Another factor is environmental **9.** _____. Today's generation is more concerned about climate **10.** _____ and pollution. As a result, they are often more interested in **11.** _____ ways of moving around, **12.** _____ as electric scooters or walking. For some, **13.** _____ a car feels unnecessary and even irresponsible.

In big cities, cars are no **14.** _____ the most practical option. Traffic jams, limited parking, and congestion charges make driving more frustrating **15.** _____ convenient. Mobile apps and public transport networks now offer quicker and cheaper alternatives.

However, for young people **16.** _____ in rural areas or places with poor public transport, having a car is still important. It gives them **17.** _____, especially when they need to work or study far **18.** ____ home.

In the end, the dream of having a car **19.** _____ disappeared—it has simply changed. For some, cars are still a goal. For others, independence now comes from **20.** _____, not from the vehicle itself.

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| **young** | **change** | **reasoning** | **such** | **hasn't** |
| **owning** | **license** | **freedom** | **so** | **than** |
| **sustainable** | **awareness** | **longer** | **many** | **using** |
| **issues** | **about** | **won't** | **rather** | **cost** |
| **off** | **mobility** | **ago** | **from** | **living** |

**4. Answer ONE of the following subsections. (3 points)**

**4.1.** Imagine you work for an environmental NGO. Write an article reflecting on how the clothing industry affects the planet and the role young people can play in changing consumer habits. (140 words)

**4.2.** Imagine you work as a counsellor at your school and are reflecting on whether part-time jobs should be encouraged for teenagers. Discuss the pros and cons of working while studying at school or university. (140 words)