

Choose one of the writing tasks below. Write at least 180–220 words. Use an appropriate style and structure. Support your ideas with examples.

Task 1.

Living in a city: opportunity or pressure for teenagers?

Write an article for a youth online magazine in which you:

- briefly describe what city life is like for teenagers
- discuss at least two advantages and two disadvantages
- explain whether city life helps or prevents teenagers from developing their talents
- give your personal opinion, supported by reasons

Task 2.

A disappointing shopping experience

Write an email to your friend in which you:

- explain where you went shopping and why
- describe a problem you had (service / quality / price / choice)
- say how you solved or tried to solve the problem
- suggest going shopping together next time and explain why it would be better

Task 3.

Do childhood places shape our personality?

Write an essay in which you:

- briefly describe a place from your childhood that was important to you
- explain how this place influenced your character, habits, or values
- discuss whether childhood environments play a significant role in shaping who we become
- give your personal opinion, supported by reasons and examples

Speaking Test, Year 10

Directions:

In this part of the test, select three task slips from those in front of you. Next choose the one you feel most confident speaking about and put the other two face down. Then take about a minute to collect your thoughts before you start to speak on the topic. You may refer to the topic as needed. Give reasons or details to support your answer. Take a deep breath and begin.

1. Talk about the statement below, saying if you agree or disagree. Give reasons.

‘Travelling is interesting but it’s always good to return to your own country.’

2. Talk about the statement below saying if you agree or disagree. Give reasons.

‘Travelling to a country is the best way to learn the language of that country.’

3. Talk about the statement below saying if you agree or disagree. Give reasons.

‘It’s more enjoyable to do hobbies with friends.’

4. Talk about the statement below saying if you agree or disagree. Give reasons.

‘It’s important to have friends of different ages.’

5. Talk about the statements below saying if you agree or disagree. Give reasons.

‘Some professional sports people earn too much money.’

6. Talk about the statements below saying if you agree or disagree. Give reasons.

‘Studying in groups is better than studying alone.’

7. Talk about the statements below saying if you agree or disagree. Give reasons.

‘People nowadays eat too much unhealthy food.’

8. Talk about the statements below saying if you agree or disagree. Give reasons.

‘It’s more interesting to do or play sport than to watch it.’

9. Talk about the statements below, saying if you agree or disagree. Give reasons.

‘It’s better to study alone than with other people.’

10. Talk about the statements below, saying if you agree or disagree. Give reasons.

‘Eating at home is better than eating out in restaurants.’

11. What is the most enjoyable type of holiday for you?

(camping, hotel, club, rented accommodation, touring, sports activities, etc.)

List 5 things not to forget when you go on holiday.

12. Describe your favourite pastime/hobby.

Why is it so enjoyable? When did you take it up? How often do you do it? etc.

13. **Are people becoming telephone addicts?**
Could you live without a telephone?
What would happen if for some reason our telephones no longer worked?
14. **Why are social networks so popular nowadays?**
What are the positive/negative effects?
15. **Do you think actors, singers, sportsmen, etc. earn too much money? Why/why not?**
16. **Under what circumstances would you:**
walk out of a restaurant?
refuse a taxi?
call the manager of a hotel?
sleep in a train/bus station?
wear casual clothes to work?
17. **If you won a lot of money, what would you do? Would you:**
keep it a secret?
stop working?
go shopping?
buy a new house?
travel around the world?
give money to your family/friends?
give money to charity?
18. **What is a good job?**
an interesting job?
a well-paid job?
a secure job?
good working conditions?
19. **If you had to move to another country because of your job,**
what country would you prefer?
what would you miss most?
what would be the most important for you?
20. **Have you ever travelled abroad?**
If yes, where did you go and what was it like? What customs were different from your country's customs? If no, would you like to go abroad? Where would you like to go and what do you think it would be like?

READING: TEXT 1

Read the text. Answer the question below.

The Mosquito

A Exasperated with having large gangs of teenagers outside their premises day and night, a growing number of British shopkeepers have taken extreme measures. They have installed a Mosquito alarm, a small, square-shaped object which is no bigger than a regular burglar alarm and just as easy to install. Fitted to the exterior wall of a shop, the Mosquito produces an incredibly irritating high frequency noise that only people younger than 25 can hear. To my mind, it seems unfair to target youths in such a way, but the device is proving a bestseller. As a result of its increasing use, hanging out with friends in front of local newsagents, something British teenagers used to enjoy doing, has become, in many places, a thing of the past.

B So far, over three thousand people have purchased the Mosquito, ranging from homeowners driven crazy by teenagers listening to music in the street outside their houses, to local councils anxious about how to prevent teenagers going close to railway lines or electrical cables. It's most popular with shopkeepers, however. 'Hanging out near my shop at weekends was all the kids round here ever did,' complained Frank Court, a newsagent from Bristol. 'Imagine how that affected my business. The elderly, in particular, felt terrified of walking past them. It all changed the moment I installed the Mosquito. The kids put up with it for about twenty minutes or so, then wandered into the shop and demanded to know what the noise was. In the end, they hated it so much they went away and stayed away. I'm over the moon.'

C Naturally, the use of Mosquitoes has split opinions. Some lawmakers consider it a useful means of crime prevention, pointing out that petty crimes such as shoplifting and vandalism have fallen on large housing estates where youths once congregated in large numbers. Others argue that the Mosquito is an illegal 'sonic weapon'. Nothing less than the civil rights of young people are at stake, they say, and the authorities should ban selling a product that so obviously discriminates against one section of the community. Furthermore, campaigners have suggested that the Mosquito could be dangerous for very young children who have sensitive hearing. 'More tests should have been carried out to see what the long-term effects might be before selling this device to the public,' said a campaigner. Whatever the rights and wrongs, the Mosquito, silent to adults, but buzzing loudly in the ears of the young is, for now, becoming more and more common.

In which paragraph does the author ...

1 gives reasons why people who own shops dislike gangs of teenagers? _____

2 describes more than one sort of people interested in owning a Mosquito? _____

3 presents arguments as to why it is unfair to target young people? _____

4 says how he or she feels about the use of the Mosquito by shop owners? _____

5 compares the Mosquito to another device? _____

READING: TEXT 2

Read the text. Choose the correct answers.

Should I Take a Gap Year?

For many British students, deciding whether to take a year out to work or travel, or whether to go straight to university from school instead can be a tough decision. On the one hand, a gap year is useful for students who can't decide which course they want to do at university. Not only does it give them more time to consider their options, but the experience can help them to see things in different ways. It's also a chance to make some money and save up for university years ahead.

On the other hand, it seems a waste of time and money to some to delay their studies when they could be learning the skills required to get the career of their dreams. These days, the decision about whether to take a gap year or not is complicated by the fact that getting, and paying for, a place at university is not as easy as it once was. In Britain, tuition fees are higher than ever before, and the competition for places at university has never been tougher. A lot of students believe that they have to start university sooner rather than later as the costs can only go up. As a direct result of all this, for a majority of students, having a year out does not seem as practical or sensible an option as it once was and, as a result, the number of gap-year students is falling.

In the UK, there are travel companies which specialise in organising student gap-year trips, many of which, to my mind, have considerably improved the gap-year experience for young people over the years. These companies have started offering 'mini-gap' trips, which last only three or four months, thus taking advantage of that short window between leaving school in June and starting university in October. They are also offering year-long gap trips which are more vocational than in the past, as well as more courses to train young people to learn a skill. A recent survey tried to discover how supportive of the gap-year experience future employers might be and found that young people who had spent a year doing voluntary work or learning a new skill had a clear advantage when it came to job seeking after university. This was because they had done something to make their job applications stand out. Although there can be no career advantage in just travelling around the world and hanging out on beaches, choosing to spend time working with disadvantaged kids in the developing world, or on work placements in offices and factories closer to home, will help young people get a job in the future.

6 According to the text, what sort of student might find taking a gap year useful?

- A A student who feels the need to have money in the bank before going to university.
- B A student with a clear idea about what subject to study or what job to get.
- C A student who isn't sure about whether to go to university or not.
- D A student who needs further skills or qualifications to get a university place.

7 Which of the following factors is currently influencing whether students take a gap year or not?

- A The high cost of renting a place to stay when studying at university.
- B A fear that studying at university may become even more expensive in the future.
- C The fact that current courses of study are becoming increasingly difficult.
- D A concern that there aren't as many good universities as there used to be.

8 Which of the following is expressed as an opinion rather than a fact by the writer?

- A The need for travel companies to change the way they provide gap-year travel.
- B The way many travel companies have begun to concentrate on mostly providing gap-year trips.
- C The need for young people to take advantage of the opportunities offered by travel companies.
- D The way a number of travel companies have helped students get more out of their gap years.

9 In what way have travel companies recently changed the sort of gap-year trips they offer?

- A They no longer offer just one-year-long trips.
- B Now all the trips they offer last fewer than six months.
- C Their trips now all involve work experience.
- D Their gap-year trips now start in June, not October.

10 What did the recent survey show?

- A Employers weren't particularly interested in whether young people had taken a gap year or not.
- B Employers were more likely to give jobs to gap-year students who had worked abroad rather than in their own country.
- C Employers favoured students who had taken a gap year and didn't mind how they spent it.
- D Employers preferred students who had been on a gap year to learn or work to students who had gone straight to university.

Reading Comprehension Test, Year 10

READING: TEXT 3

Read the text. Fill in the missing sentences.

Victims of fame?

Everybody thinks being a teenage celebrity is glamorous, and, to a large extent, it is. 11___. However, there is, of course, a downside to being in the public eye, and there are many high profile cases of youngsters whose lives have gone seriously wrong. So, how can teenage celebrities avoid becoming victims of fame? When the lives of teenage stars go out of control, the press are quick to blame their employers and their pushy parents, and they have a point. Often it is the pressure that other people put on celebrities that causes most stress.

In a recent interview, American sitcom star Tia Mowery described how she had found being on a hit show emotionally and physically exhausting. 12___. It is a responsibility few teenagers have to face. 13___. They also need to be shrewd enough to recognise when a new acquaintance is not to be trusted. The presence of a well-known celebrity can have a strange effect on other people. They turn and stare, and ask for autographs. Imagine how that can affect an insecure teenager. 14___. Teenage celebrities need to be well-balanced enough to realise that fame is not likely to last, and thick-skinned enough not to get upset by criticism or negative attention. It's a big ask, and no wonder that so many find it difficult.

The quality of the support network behind any young star is vital. 15___. This isn't always the case. A lot of parents are star-struck, enjoying their children's success to the point that they encourage them to be vain and badly behaved. They allow their famous offspring to do whatever he or she wants, and, even worse, they help them spend the money they earn instead of investing it wisely.

- A Teenage stars have to work hard at keeping their true friends, who may feel jealous of their success.
- B It can easily make any individual vain and self-important, with a false idea of how important they are.
- C Stardom brings fortune as well as fame, and experiences that average kids can only dream of.
- D A case in point is that of teenage stars who ended up losing all their money and finding themselves on the wrong side of the law.
- E As the leading actor, she had felt the strain of carrying the show, knowing that if she had put in a bad performance, the careers of other people would have been affected.

F It's no surprise that big Hollywood stars like Jodie Foster and Daniel Radcliffe, who started out as child actors, came from families who considered the well-being of their kids more important than being in a film.

READING: TEXT 4

Read the text. Choose the correct answers.

Is There Such a Thing as Internet Addiction?

Ben Alexander always struggled to (16) _____ in. Teased at school, he (17) _____ to the internet, where he found a (18) _____ new world of friends. Subscribing (19) _____ the hugely popular online game World of Warcraft, he (20) _____ 12 million other people – including the actor Vin Diesel, the presenter Jonathan Ross and his wife Jane Goldman – in a quest reminiscent of Tolkien's Lord of the Rings.

In the game, players create avatars in whose guise they spend hours with other players (21) _____ battles. "There's lots of working together," says Alexander. "That's what made it so attractive, because the social thing was something I always had trouble with. It was a lot easier to socialise and make friends online than it was in real life."

The 19-year-old's interest in the game soon developed into an obsession. He began (22) _____ his biology lectures at university and spending up to 17 hours a day online. Eventually he had depression diagnosed and was (23) _____ medication. He was also treated (24) _____ internet addiction.

Alexander admits that he needed help: "I don't think I would have been able to (25) _____ out of it myself."

16 A match	B suit	C fit	D adjust
17 A watched	B faced	C addressed	D turned
18 A full	B specific	C definite	D whole
19 A on	B to	C at	D in
20 A involved	B introduced	C joined	D connected
21 A fighting	B setting	C running	D arranging
22 A delaying	B missing	C wasting	D losing
23 A cut on	B taken in	C put on	D kept from
24 A of	B from	C against	D for
25 A get	B run	C go	D fall

GRADE 10 KEYS

LISTENING

1. F
2. T
3. T
4. F
5. F
6. A
7. A
8. B
9. C
10. C
11. B
12. A
13. C
14. A
15. A

READING

1. B
2. B
3. C
4. A
5. A
6. A
7. B
8. D
9. A
10. D
11. C
12. E
13. A
14. B
15. F
16. C
17. D
18. D
19. B
20. C
21. A
22. B
23. C
24. D
25. A