

Aim High 5 Exam practice 2

Reading

Tips

- Read the text quickly to find out what it is about.
- Read the sentences and the options (a–d).
- Find the part of the text that relates to each sentence.
- Remember, the sentences follow the same order as the text.
- Choose the correct option, then check that the other options are definitely wrong.

Read the text. Choose the best option (a–d) to complete the sentences (1–5).

Genius gone wrong

We like to marvel at geniuses of the past, who, through the well-known combination of perspiration and inspiration, invented things that have changed our lives. But what about the ‘geniuses’ whose ideas were a little short of brilliant? The history of failed inventions is littered with ideas that were mad, bad or even dangerous.

In the field of transport, Sir Clive Sinclair’s C5 has to go down as one of most catastrophic flops of all time. Launched in 1985, this battery-powered tricycle was intended to replace the car for city journeys. With a top speed of 24 kilometres per hour, it was marketed for its low cost and minimal pollution levels. Its fatal flaw was that it had no roof, leaving the driver exposed to the wet and windy British weather. Moreover, the driver’s position was extremely low to the ground, leading to fears that drivers would be vulnerable in collisions with other vehicles.

The Segway, launched in 2001, has attempted to fill the same niche as the C5, aimed at providing a clean, green, effort-free means of individual urban transport. It consists of two wheels, a small platform for standing on, and a central handlebar for steering and controlling speed. The vehicle has been adopted by some police departments, and other specialized markets, but time will tell whether it will ever gain the mass popularity that its inventor, Dean Kamen, hoped for.

On top of the list of inventions that did more harm than good must be DDT. This ‘wonder-pesticide’, first used in the 1960s, promised the eradication of dangerous pests that caused diseases such as malaria. It was soon found to have serious health consequences for humans, and caused untold damage to the environment by killing not only harmful insects but also beneficial ones. It was soon withdrawn from sale.

So, from the mad and the bad to the simply ridiculous. Who on earth first thought of spam email, now the blight of all our everyday lives. Just think, had no one thought of the idea, we wouldn’t have to spend time deleting them. But for downright craziness the prize must go to phone fingers. These plastic finger-covers for the thumb and index finger were invented for people who use touch-screen telephones so they don’t leave smudges on the screen. Not surprisingly, the idea hasn’t taken off!

- 1 The Sinclair C5
 - a was successful for a while.
 - b was extremely successful.
 - c never had any success.
 - d was popular in cities.
- 2 The main problem with the C5 was
 - a its low speed.
 - b its high cost.
 - c high pollution levels.
 - d vulnerability in a collision.
- 3 According to the author, the Segway
 - a has been less successful than the C5.
 - b has had no success.
 - c is used by the police.
 - d may become popular one day.
- 4 DDT
 - a was harmful to the environment.
 - b killed only harmful insects.
 - c didn't succeed in killing any insects.
 - d was a medicine that could cure malaria.
- 5 The author thinks that
 - a spam email and phone fingers are equally ridiculous.
 - b spam email brings some benefits.
 - c phone fingers are a ridiculous idea.
 - d phone fingers might be popular with some people.

Use of English

Tips

- Read the text once for general meaning.
- Remember, the missing words are often grammatical words such as articles, auxiliary verbs, prepositions, etc.
- Read the words around each gap very carefully to make sure you choose the correct one.

Complete the text with the missing words (1–10). Use one word only in each gap.

Making us buy

Have you ever gone into a supermarket intending ¹ _____ buy one thing and come out with twenty? If so, the chances are that you've been the target of clever marketing. ² _____ are known to be many subtle marketing techniques that supermarkets use to persuade us to buy. Supermarkets know that shoppers want to spend ³ _____ little time as possible in their store, but ⁴ _____ the other hand, they want to keep us there. It's no coincidence that supermarkets don't provide us ⁵ _____ maps of the store – the idea is ⁶ _____ us to wander through the aisles and be tempted by the special offers. It's ⁷ _____ quite deliberate that the essentials – milk, bread, vegetables – are deliberately spread all around the store. Research shows that we generally keep our eyes at about eye-level while we're walking around the store. So guess ⁸ _____ the most expensive items are? At eye-level! Finally, supermarkets know that feeling hungry ⁹ _____ us buy more. So, the next time you come out of a supermarket munching on something you suddenly felt you had to eat, just think that ¹⁰ _____ it not been for the smell of fresh bread, your money would probably still be in your pocket!

Listening

3.14 Listen to a radio programme about a website for teenage entrepreneurs.

Decide if statements 1–8 are true or false.

- 1 Jeremy's website offers financial help to teenagers.
- 2 Jeremy was very rich by the age of sixteen.
- 3 Teenagers often have very good computer skills.
- 4 Teenagers know what teenagers and adults want to buy.
- 5 Melissa Good developed some new computer games for boys.
- 6 Teenagers risk a lot by starting a business.
- 7 Teenagers don't often borrow money from banks.
- 8 Jeremy's website allows teenagers to discuss problems with each other.

Writing

Tips

- Plan your ideas before you start writing.
- Organize your ideas into paragraphs.
- Remember to include your own opinion.

Write an essay on the following subject.

The mobile phone is the most important invention of the last 50 years.

In your essay:

- discuss the way in which mobile phones have changed our lives
- talk about the advantages and disadvantages of mobile phones
- give your opinion about mobile phones.

Speaking

Preparation

- Read the statement and think about your opinion.
- Use a variety of expressions to express your opinion, e.g. *In my opinion ...*, *It seems to me ...*, *I would say that ...* .
- Listen to your partner's ideas and react by agreeing or disagreeing politely, e.g. *Yes, I can see your point, but ...*, *That's true, but don't you think ...?*
- Try to reach agreement with your partner.

Work in pairs. Read the statement below and discuss it.

It's wrong to show commercials during children's TV programmes.

These ideas may help you:

- Do you agree or disagree with the statement? Why?
- Can you add examples?
- Can you talk about your experience, or the experience of family members?