



Cambridge International AS & A Level

THINKING SKILLS

Paper 2 Critical Thinking

9694/22

May/June 2020

1 hour 45 minutes



You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **all** questions.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 50.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [].

This document has **8** pages. Blank pages are indicated.

Section A

Study the evidence and then answer questions 1 and 2.

Source A**Extract from article in popular magazine**

Playing video games may benefit the brain. Studies suggest that concentration may be improved as a result of video gaming. Even more surprisingly, there is evidence that actual physical changes take place in the brain, with those areas involved in concentration being larger in the brains of regular gamers. However, there is also evidence that gaming can be addictive, with brain changes in regular gamers that are similar to those in people with other addictive disorders.

Source B**Extract from trade magazine for video game industry**

Although some people want to ban video games because they claim they are addictive, the effect of video games on the brain is actually very similar to the effect of dairy products on the health of the individual. Dairy products are indeed harmful if taken in excessive amounts, contributing to high cholesterol and subsequent damage to the circulatory system. However, health experts now generally agree that dairy products, in moderation, are good for health. In the same way, moderate use of video games may enable the individual to benefit without any negative effect on their health.

Source C**Extract from journal for media professionals**

The use of sound in video games does a lot to immerse the player in the game. With modern sound systems a high degree of realism is possible; critics agree that sound is as important a factor in determining the impact of a film as images on screen. The expression 'film', with its implication of it being a purely visual experience, is therefore somewhat out of date and probably originated in the days of 'silent movies'. What is true of films is also true of video games – sound and visuals work together to make the game seem as realistic as possible.

Source D**Extract from social science journal**

The top four countries for the amount of video gaming per 100 000 of the population are Japan, South Korea, United States and the UK. The countries with the highest amount of intentional homicide per 100 000 are Honduras, El Salvador, Venezuela and Jamaica. Very little video gaming goes on in these countries. This shows that people who are alarmed about the connection between video gaming and violent behaviour are misguided. Whilst it is true that many video games do involve violent scenarios and participants inflicting harm on people represented on the screen, it seems that the effect of this is to reduce real life violence. This may well be because such fantasy violence acts as a 'release valve', reducing the levels of real violence in society.

Source E

Statement by campaign group opposed to video games

In the US, the average 8–12-year-old plays 13 hours of video games per week and the average 13–18-year-old plays 14 hours per week. Given the violent content of these games, it seems likely that this is the explanation for an increase in the number of mass shootings carried out by disaffected teenagers in the US. In addition, playing video games is clearly a major contributor to the problem of child obesity. Instead of going out to play and meet their friends, US teenagers sit slumped in front of a screen getting no exercise. They are also failing to develop social skills and confidence in dealing with people.

- 1 (a) To what extent is the reliability of Source B weakened by vested interest? [3]
- (b) Source C describes some similarities between films and video games. Suggest **two** differences that might make video games more addictive than films. [2]
- (c) Source D concludes that “people who are alarmed about the connection between video gaming and violent behaviour are misguided.”
- (i) Explain **one** problem with the relevance of the statistics in Source D when used to draw its conclusion. [2]
- (ii) Intentional homicide rates have risen in those countries where video gaming has increased in popularity.
- What impact does this additional information have on the conclusion in Source D? [4]
- (d) Look at Source E. Explain why banning video games would not necessarily reduce the problem of child obesity in the US. [3]

- 2 *You are advised to spend some time planning your answer before you begin to write it.*

‘Violent video games should be banned.’

To what extent do you agree with this claim? Write a short, reasoned argument to support your conclusion, using and evaluating the evidence provided. [8]

Section B

Read the following passage and then answer questions 3, 4 and 5.

- 1 Ticket prices for professional popular music concerts are typically 10 times the average hourly pay rate and are likely to go on rising as the cost of putting on concerts increases. A performance by a band is now an elaborate piece of theatre, with sophisticated lighting, several costume changes and dancers prancing about performing complicated choreographed moves. Regrettable as it may be, professional popular music concerts will not survive. They have become an elite art form, like opera, which is well beyond the reach of the ordinary person, so the traditional audience will not support these concerts.
- 2 Even if they go to a concert, it is not really a 'live' experience. Venues are so large, typically a stadium, that very few people can see the stage. Even if they can, the performers are so far away that they appear to be matchstick-size figures in the far distance. This means that most people watch the concert on the big screens that the promoters erect throughout the venue.
- 3 People will increasingly stay at home to see and hear their favourite bands. Large-screen televisions with sophisticated sound systems offer a superb audio-visual experience. Obviously, this technology is expensive, but most people will regard it as money well spent in order to watch their favourite bands in the comfort of their own homes – no more queuing for the toilet and buying food and drink at rip-off prices.
- 4 Another problem for live music concerts is the growth in the number of different musical styles or 'genres'. The days in which one could summarise popular music as jazz, country and western, or rock have long gone. With so many different genres, the promoters of concerts will struggle with an ever-decreasing pool of people from which to draw their audience.
- 5 Others may argue that there will always be small venues that survive by attracting an audience for a local act or niche artist. But the local singer-songwriter trying his latest material on his family and friends is not a proper professional live music concert. So this is not going to alter the situation.

- 3 (a) Using the exact words from the passage as far as possible, identify the *main conclusion*. [2]
- (b) Using the exact words from the passage as far as possible, identify **three** *intermediate conclusions*. [6]
- (c) Using the exact words from the passage as far as possible, identify **one** *counter-assertion*. [2]
- (d) Identify **one** *unstated assumption* required by the argument in paragraph 1. [2]
- 4 (a) Identify an *inconsistency* between paragraphs 1 and 3 and explain the impact on the strength of the reasoning. [4]
- (b) Identify and explain **one** flaw or weakness in
- (i) paragraph 4. [2]
- (ii) paragraph 5. [2]

- 5 *You are advised to spend some time planning your answer before you begin to write it.*

‘Students should not be allowed to listen to music whilst studying.’

Write your own short argument to support **or** challenge this claim. The conclusion of your argument must be stated. Credit will not be given for repeating ideas from the passage. [8]

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