

**ВСЕРОССИЙСКАЯ ОЛИМПИАДА ШКОЛЬНИКОВ ПО АНГЛИЙСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ**  
**2021-2022 учебный год**  
**Муниципальный этап**  
**9-11 класс**

**READING (13 points)**

*Time: 20 minutes*

*Task 1. Read the article. Six sentences have been removed from it. For questions 1–6, choose from the sentences A–G the one which fits each gap. There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.*

**Education of the Future**

For much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, education all over the world did not change in any dramatic or long-lasting ways. The format was essentially the same and consisted of teachers standing at the front of a classroom, passing on knowledge to students who were sitting and listening to them. This knowledge came from standardised books which were issued by the authorities. In line with this traditional approach, students also had tests at specific times during the year as a way to assess what they had remembered.

However, with the rise in the power of technology and the range of products and innovations in the last two decades, education and classrooms have been changing dramatically. (1)\_\_\_\_. There are several ways in which learning in the future may differ from now.

Firstly, what is taught is changing. It is likely that we will see a move towards teaching more skills rather than fact-based knowledge. The internet holds much of the world's knowledge, but separating truth from opinion can be difficult, especially for young people. Unfortunately, they tend to automatically accept the validity of much of what they read online. (2)\_\_\_\_. Another important life skill is working together, so students will need to learn how to communicate with each other well. This could include developing abilities such as sympathy and understanding, as well as offering support to others.

In the near future, a lot more technology will be integrated into educational systems. Many course materials are already available online and large numbers of students around the world regularly interact with computer programmes as a way to assist their learning. As technology and artificial intelligence (AI) develop further, they could offer far more benefits to schools and universities. Teaching robots, which would act as classroom assistants, are one possible future innovation. (3)\_\_\_\_.

In addition, there is the notion that classrooms are becoming obsolete, and that future teaching could be done online using virtual classrooms. At the moment, virtual classrooms are generally only used for specific reasons. (4)\_\_\_\_. Technology also enables mobile classrooms. In Bangladesh, children are taught on floating school boats during the monsoon season when flooding prevents them from attending their usual schools. These boats use solar technology to power computers and are an innovative technological solution.

The rise in educational software means that learning can also be more personalised for individual students. (5)\_\_\_\_. In this way, the computer program can increase or decrease the challenge of the contents for each student to help them learn and progress. It is likely, as research has shown that it does not significantly improve learning, that homework will become a thing of the past.

A final point which is often raised when discussing the future of learning is what the teacher's role will be. It is important to remember that there are certain aspects of teaching which are unique to human teachers. Humans learn by observing and copying others, and by sharing experiences. Teachers are able to emotionally connect with their students, which is something computers and robots cannot do. (6)\_\_\_\_. It is far more likely that teachers and technology will join forces in the future in order to improve education for everyone.

**A** In fact, they are a long way from being able to understand the complex needs of individual students.

**B** Since the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, technology has played a greater role in learning and will continue to do so.

**C** For example, with children living in remote areas in large countries like Australia and China who attend school part-time while also using virtual classrooms.

**D** As a result, students will have to be taught how to critically analyse information and find reliable sources.

**E** However, it is important that students fully understand the benefits and limitations of technology.

**F** They could work with those students requiring extra help or assist teachers with their paperwork.

**G** As a student works through learning materials, the software can assess how well they are doing.

**Task 2. Read the article. For questions 7–13, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.**

### **Questioning the connection between birth order and personality**

In many families across a variety of cultures, the personalities of siblings are routinely dissected and compared to draw out similarities and differences. Many of those comparisons tend to link

characteristics to age, specifically birth order. Popular culture attaches a range of personality attributes to first born, middle and youngest children and 20<sup>th</sup> century research is largely responsible for this practice. Yet current academic thinking on this topic has comprehensively rejected the claims of all this previous research.

The idea that a child's personality was in some part determined by birth order was first proposed by the psychiatrist Alfred Adler early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He suggested that the order in which siblings were born could account for a great deal of their contrasting personality traits. For example, first-born children were more likely to be conservative and diligent, whereas middle children are emotionally stable and youngest children the most ambitious. Studies undertaken in the 1960s and 1980s also concluded that birth order and personality were linked.

The idea was further developed into a theory during the 1990s by psychologist Frank Sulloway. He researched a large group of famous historical figures and came to some intriguing conclusions. He noticed some trends in personality traits and concluded that political leaders were often first-born children, and thinking people like Charles Darwin and Mahatma Gandhi were later-born children. His theory was called 'Family Niche Theory' and despite many people knowing neither the name of the theory nor its creator, Frank Sulloway, it is clear that it has become a commonly held belief in many societies, especially in Western cultures. It is not difficult to imagine why this theory is widely popular with parents and educators, as it is intuitive and many people can easily find anecdotal examples in their own families.

However, despite our desire to believe it, more recent research has found no evidence to support the theory. Psychologist Julia Rohrer, working at a German university, conducted a study of 20,000 people in three countries, the UK, the USA and Germany. The research could not find any clear differences in personality based on birth order alone. Given that there is such a widespread belief in the idea, it is worth exploring in more detail why the research found no supporting evidence.

Firstly, it is important to highlight the flaws in the original studies. These studies, which involved teenagers or university students, were conducted at one moment in time, and therefore are unable to inform us as to whether the personalities of the people involved shifted over time. It is well known that young people's attitude towards rules, obligations and duties becomes more positive as they mature. As such, different aspects of the personalities of the young participants in these studies may have subsequently flourished. Without any follow-up studies on this cohort, we cannot know with

any certainty.

Another factor to be considered is that in these early studies, participants were asked to evaluate themselves and their siblings. Whilst this may not seem to be contentious, it is in actual fact highly significant because the way we judge ourselves against others can differ enormously. In addition, there is a possibility that people had already been influenced by the ideas behind birth order theory and therefore this data cannot be considered as particularly reliable.

What was significant about Julia Rohrer's recent study was that far more analytical measures were employed. The researchers measured differences within families and then compared families with each other. They compared profiles of people from different families but with the same birth order, and importantly, with people who had never met each other. Her investigation also extended over the complete life span of participants. After having applied these more rigorous measures, the results showed nothing to indicate that birth order caused personality differences. Subsequent studies have reached the exact same conclusion and suggest that previous research was either flawed or unreliable and that any observations were exaggerated.

Going forward, it may well take some time for the myth of birth order affecting personality to be thoroughly overturned. After all, it can be challenging to change people's beliefs when something sounds or feels natural. However, this topic serves as a useful reminder as to the importance of revisiting research in light of new evidence so that we can transcend outdated ideas and theories and build a better understanding of the world we live in.

**7. What does the writer say about birth order and personality in the first paragraph?**

- A** Most academic research on this topic was conducted during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- B** Birth order affects personality in similar ways across a variety of different cultures.
- C** There is no evidence to conclusively prove a connection between personality and birth order.
- D** Families love to spend time analysing the differences between older and younger siblings.

**8. According to early psychologists, the order that children were born in ...**

- A** helped to understand why three was the best number of children in a family.
- B** determined whether they were more likely to be successful and famous.
- C** affected how their relationships were with each other in later life.
- D** was one of the things that affected the development of their character.

**9. The writer suggests that Family Niche Theory was ...**

- A** more interesting to educators than other members of society.
- B** likely to be believed as it made sense to most people.
- C** widely promoted by political leaders during the 1990s.
- D** an easy way for parents to better understand their children.

**10.** What does the writer say was problematic with the early studies of birth order?

- A** They only focused on the personalities of young adults.
- B** There was a lack of subsequent research using the original participants.
- C** The studies focused too heavily on positive characteristics.
- D** The researchers were uncertain about the results at the time.

**11.** According to the writer, the method of research in the early studies ...

- A** ensured participants gave more factually correct information.
- B** was overly influenced by other theories at the time.
- C** was a significant improvement on previous methods.
- D** produced subjective results that were probably inaccurate.

**12.** Why is recent research considered to be more reliable than previous studies?

- A** It applied more rigorous research methods.
- B** It studied a much larger group of people.
- C** It reached more realistic conclusions.
- D** It was conducted in many different cultures.

**13.** Overall, the writer wants to highlight the fact that ...

- A** people no longer believe birth order and personality are connected.
- B** research from the past is often revealed to be wrong.
- C** knowledge must be constantly re-examined and corrected.
- D** academic research often challenges people's beliefs.

**Transfer your answers to the answer sheet.**