



Prova d'accés a la Universitat 2009

Anglès

Model 2

Read the passage carefully and answer the questions in English. USE YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE.

Time allowed: 1 hour and 30 minutes. Total score: 10 points.

Online networking 'harms health'

According to expert Dr Aric Sigman, people's health could be harmed by social networking sites because they reduce levels of face-to-face contact. Dr Aric Sigman claims that websites such as MySpace or Facebook try to enrich social lives, but end up keeping people apart.

Dr Sigman makes his warning in *Biologist*, the journal of the Institute of Biology. He suggests that a lack of "real" social networking, involving personal interaction, may have biological effects. He also says that evidence suggests that a lack of face-to-face networking could alter the way genes work and influence mental performance. This, he claims, could increase the risk of health problems as serious as cancer and dementia.

Dr Sigman maintains that social networking sites have played a significant role in making people become more isolated. "Social networking sites should allow us to enrich our social lives, but what we find is very different". Dr Sigman says that there is research that suggests that the number of hours people spend interacting face-to-face has fallen dramatically since 1987, as the use of electronic media has increased. And he claims that interacting "in person" has an effect on the body that is not seen when e-mails are written. "When we are 'really' with people different things happen," he said. "It's probably an evolutionary mechanism that recognises the benefits of us being together geographically". "Much of it isn't understood, but there really seems to be a difference between 'real presence' and the virtual variety."

Dr Sigman also argues that using electronic media diminishes people's social skills and their ability to read body language. "One of the most pronounced changes in the daily habits of British citizens is a reduction in the number of minutes per day that they interact with another human being," he said. "In less than two decades, the number of people saying there is no-one with whom they discuss important matters nearly tripled." Dr Sigman says he is worried about where this is all leading. He added: "It's not that I'm old-fashioned in terms of new technology, but the purpose of any new technology should be to provide a tool that improves our lives."

Adapted from BBC News, February 19th 2009.

Vocabulary: social networking sites = sites that focus on building online communities of people who share interests and/or activities or want to connect with friends. For example: MySpace, Facebook, etc.



1. Say whether the following statements are TRUE or FALSE. Explain WHY using your own words OR finding evidence in the text. NO marks are given for only TRUE or FALSE. (1 point)

- a) Social networking sites favour face-to face interaction.
- b) A lack of face-to-face contact could increase the risk of dementia.
- c) People benefit from being together geographically.
- d) British citizens have tripled the amount of time they spend discussing important matters with other people.

2. In your own words and based on the ideas from the text, answer the following question. (1 point)

- a) According to Dr Sigman, what are the main effects that social networking sites have on people?

3. Find in the text words or phrases which mean the same as the following (1 point):

- 1) To hurt, damage.
- 2) Proof, verification.
- 3) Conducting, guiding.
- 4) Antiquated, to believe in and behave according to the values and standards of the past.

4) Follow the instructions for each question and answer them (2 points):

4.1) Fill in the blanks the following sentences with the correct form of the verb in brackets.

A: 'Have you heard from Jim recently?'

B: 'No, I (send) him an e-mail two weeks ago but he (not answer) it yet'.

4.2) Rewrite this sentence using a modal verb. Do not change the meaning of the original sentence.

'I'm sure she's chatting on the Internet'.

She

4.3) Join the following sentences with a relative pronoun.

I met a man at the party. His wife is studying the risks children face while on-line.

I met a man at the party

4.4) Rewrite the following sentence using the 3rd conditional form. Do not change the meaning of the original sentence.

'I went to bed very late last night because I spent hours surfing the Net'.

If

5. Look at the underlined part of the words below. Three of the words in each line (A, B, C, D) contain the same sound. Circle the word which contains a different sound (1 point):

- | | | | |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| A) <u>near</u> | B) <u>air</u> | C) <u>beer</u> | D) <u>here</u> |
| A) <u>then</u> | B) <u>think</u> | C) <u>mother</u> | D) <u>there</u> |
| A) <u>down</u> | B) <u>town</u> | C) <u>cow</u> | D) <u>low</u> |
| A) <u>jumped</u> | B) <u>looked</u> | C) <u>waited</u> | D) <u>missed</u> |

6. Choose ONLY ONE of the following options. (4 points)

Write a composition of 120-150 words on:

- a) Why do you think social networking sites are so popular nowadays? Do you use them? Why? Explain.
- b) Write about the positive and negative aspects of communication technology (i.e. e-mails, chats, instant messages, text messages, etc.).