



OPTION A: MINDFULNESS: A BEGINNER'S GUIDE **KEY**

1 Mindfulness is a meditation technique aimed at focusing the mind on the present moment. A report published this week analysing  
2 data involving 3,000 participants suggests that mindfulness can help alleviate feelings of stress and increase quality of life. The study  
3 also shows measurable improvements of up to 20% in symptoms of anxiety and depression.

4 So, what is mindfulness, and how does it work? Unlike mantra meditation, which involves focusing concentration on a particular  
5 word or sound, mindfulness aims to achieve a relaxed, non-judgmental awareness of your thoughts, feelings and sensations. This is  
6 what Mark Williams, professor of clinical psychology at the Oxford Mindfulness Centre, calls a "direct knowing of what is going on  
7 inside and outside ourselves, moment by moment."

8 Buddhist monks have been practicing a similar technique for 2,500 years, but it didn't reach Western medicine until the late 1970s.  
9 Jon Kabat-Zinn, a US medical professor, began successfully treating patients suffering from chronic pain with a program he called  
10 Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction.

11 In recent years, organizations as varied as the US Army and Google have started offering mindfulness training for employees;  
12 moreover, increasing numbers of schools are incorporating it into the curriculum for 13- and 14-year-olds. Frequently, the pace and  
13 stress of modern living leave us caught up in a stream of thoughts and feelings, trapped in past problems or overwhelmed by future  
14 anxieties. The idea is that by connecting with the present moment mindfulness practitioners become essentially able to manage  
15 feelings and sensations.

16 The techniques sound simple enough: sitting in a quiet place, deep-belly breathing, paying attention to your body and training the  
17 mind to observe, focus and filter. Why not give it a go?

I \* COMPREHENSION (4 points)

CHOOSE AND WRITE THE CORRECT OPTION (A, B, C or D). (0.5 points each)

1. According to the text, mindfulness... (a)

(a) might be an alternative to other stress-relieving techniques.

(b) focuses attention on a particular word or sound.

(c) is required as a training method in the US Army.

(d) aims to manipulate your thoughts.

2. According to the text, mindfulness is... (c)

(a) a mantra meditation.

(b) not useful for treating patients with chronic pain.

(c) about paying attention to your body and to present time.

(d) the fundamental pillar of Buddhism.

ARE THESE STATEMENTS TRUE OR FALSE? JUSTIFY YOUR ANSWERS WITH THE PRECISE WORDS OR PHRASES FROM THE TEXT, OR USE YOUR OWN WORDS. (0.5 points each)

3. Mindfulness has nothing to do with Buddhism. **FALSE (line 8)** "Buddhist monks have been practicing a similar technique for 2,500 years"

4. Google and other companies have started sponsoring mindfulness courses in schools. **FALSE (line 11)** "In recent years, organizations as varied as the US Army and Google have started offering mindfulness training for employees."

5. Apparently, it is quite easy to practice mindfulness. **TRUE (lines 16-17)** "The techniques sound simple enough: (sitting in a quiet place, deep-belly breathing, paying attention to your body, training the mind to observe, focus and filter.)"

6. The writer suggests that we try practising mindfulness. **TRUE (line 17)** "Why not give it a go?"

7. FIND IN THE TEXT: (0.5 points)

7.1. ONE SYNONYM FOR "worker". (noun) **employee(s)**. (line 11)

7.2. ONE SYNONYM FOR "current". (adjective). **present** (lines 1, 14)

8. FIND IN THE TEXT: (0.5 points)

8.1. ONE WORD MEANING "a way of carrying out a particular task." **technique(s)** (lines 1, 8, 16)

8.2. ONE WORD MEANING "a man who lives in a monastery." **monk** (line 8)

II \* USE OF ENGLISH (3 points; 0.5 points each)

9. FILL IN THE GAPS WITH A CORRECT FORM OF THE VERB IN BRACKETS:

9.1. "We should... Eve yesterday." (call) **have called**

9.2. "He can't afford... on holiday." (go) **to go**

10. FILL IN THE GAPS WITH THE CORRECT OPTION:

10.1. "Sorry, but I sent you the message... mistake." for / by / about / in **by**

10.2. "Everybody can get benefits... mindfulness." of /with / from / by **from**

11. JOIN THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES USING A RELATIVE. MAKE CHANGES IF NECESSARY: "People practise relaxation techniques. These people live longer." **People who / that practise relaxation techniques live longer.**

12. GIVE A QUESTION FOR THE UNDERLINED WORDS: "I have been practising mindfulness for years." (For) **how long have you been practising mindfulness (for)?**

13. TURN THE FOLLOWING SENTENCE INTO REPORTED SPEECH: "He asked me, 'Do you still want to go to the show?'" **He asked me if I still wanted to go to the show.**

14. COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONAL SENTENCE: "She'd have taken me to the station if..." **subject + had + past participle.**

III \* WRITING (3 points)

15. WRITE A COMPOSITION OF APPROXIMATELY 120 WORDS ABOUT THE TOPIC PROPOSED AND FOCUS STRICTLY ON IT:

**What do you do to deal with your stress?**



OPTION B: MARY POPPINS: WHY WE NEED A SPOONFUL OF SUGAR MORE THAN EVER **KEY**

- 1 It is well known that PL Travers, who wrote the original Mary Poppins books, hated the 1964 Disney film adaptation. The author  
2 seems to have got angry about the animation, the Hollywood version of Edwardian England, the pompousness of the songs and the  
3 presentation of Mrs. Banks as a suffragette. The makers of the new film ('Mary Poppins Returns', 2018) say they want to reintroduce  
4 joy at a particularly grey moment in history, but with Poppins it was never a question of joy.  
5 The original Poppins is not the nice version with whom most of us are familiar, but a far darker, more irregular creature: she is  
6 impatient, indignant and even incredulous when presented with the weakness of others. Poppins is a woman aware of the limitations  
7 of people, and while she is sent to the Banks home to comfort sad children it is also her mission to critique some key English values:  
8 coldness as a vehicle for stability, adherence to tradition and emotional distance as virtues.  
9 What is it she teaches the children? Empathy, mindfulness, a determination to win, tidiness, not to worry about whether or not they  
10 are liked, and to simultaneously believe and not believe what they see. As in the books, in the 2018 film Mary Poppins denies to the  
11 children that magic things have happened, inculcating scepticism and encouraging them to have their own point of view.  
12 For all her apparent invulnerability, Poppins shows regret at the end of the movie in a tender moment with her talking umbrella.  
13 She does not have a love interest, which in the context of Hollywood heroines might be considered the most radical thing about her.

I \* COMPREHENSION (4 points)

CHOOSE AND WRITE THE CORRECT OPTION (A, B, C or D). (0.5 points each)

1. According to the text, PL Travers... (b)  
(a) boycotted the Disney adaptation. (b) disapproved of the Disney adaptation.  
(c) was happy with the Hollywood version. (d) liked the new adaptation.
2. According to the text, in the original books Mary Poppins... (c)  
(a) was a nice nanny. (b) talked to her umbrella.  
(c) was not as charming as in the movie. (d) was fed up with the Banks' children.

ARE THESE STATEMENTS TRUE OR FALSE? JUSTIFY YOUR ANSWERS WITH THE PRECISE WORDS OR PHRASES FROM THE TEXT, OR USE YOUR OWN WORDS. (0.5 points each)

3. The filmmakers wanted to make a very dark film. **FALSE** (lines 3-4) "The makers of the new film (Mary Poppins Returns, 2018) say they want to reintroduce joy..."
4. The original Mary Poppins was very understanding about people's limitations. **FALSE** (lines 5-6) "she is impatient, indignant and even incredulous when presented with the weakness of others."
5. In the books, Mary Poppins takes a critical view of English society. **TRUE** (line 7) "... it is also her mission to critique some key English values."
6. In the new film, Mary Poppins teaches the children to be sceptical. **TRUE** (lines 10-11) "... to simultaneously believe and not believe what they see" / "... Mary Poppins denies to the children that magic things have happened, inculcating scepticism and encouraging them to have their own point of view."
7. FIND IN THE TEXT: (0.5 points)  
7.1. ONE OPPOSITE FOR "strength" (noun). *weakness* (line 6)  
7.2. ONE SYNONYM FOR "happiness" (noun). *joy* (line 4)
8. FIND IN THE TEXT: (0.5 points)  
8.1 ONE WORD MEANING "the ability to understand or share the feelings of another person." *empathy* (line 9)  
8.2. ONE WORD MEANING "the quality of being neat and clean." *tidiness* (line 9)

II \* USE OF ENGLISH (3 points; 0.5 points each)

9. FILL IN THE GAPS WITH A CORRECT FORM OF THE VERB IN BRACKETS:  
9.1. "Don't disturb her now. She... a rest." (have). *is having*  
9.2. "If only I... more time and money to travel around." (have). *had / had had*
10. FILL IN THE GAPS WITH THE CORRECT OPTION:  
10.1. "The cat is hiding... us under the table." over / from / up / away *from*  
10.2. "Her girlfriend went to the airport to pick her..." up / along / off / behind *up*
11. REWRITE THE SENTENCE WITHOUT CHANGING ITS MEANING. BEGIN AS INDICATED: "My dress isn't as pretty as yours." Your dress is... *prettier than mine.*
12. JOIN THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES USING A RELATIVE. MAKE CHANGES IF NECESSARY: "The summer was long and hot. I graduated from university in that summer." *The summer (when) I graduated from university was long and hot.*
13. TURN THE FOLLOWING SENTENCE INTO THE PASSIVE VOICE: "The council will build three hundred new houses in this area." *Three hundred new houses will be built in this area (by the council).*
14. GIVE A QUESTION FOR THE UNDERLINED WORDS: "The TV series about The Beatles begins in a few days." *When does the TV series about The Beatles begin?*

III \* WRITING (3 points)

15. WRITE A COMPOSITION OF APPROXIMATELY 120 WORDS ABOUT THE TOPIC PROPOSED AND FOCUS STRICTLY ON IT:  
**Which is your favourite movie? Write about it.**