

Section 1 Reading

Read the text below and answer the questions that follow.

Steve, a **typical** American, stays home on workdays. He plugs into a computer terminal in order to hook up with the office, and he sends and receives work during the day by electronic mail and fax-modem.

Evenings, he puts on stereo headphones; watch a movie on his VCR, or logs back onto the computer to visit the internet. On many days, Steve does not talk to other human beings, and does not see any people except those on the television. Steve is imaginary, but his life style is very common. More and more, the inventions of modern technology seem to be cutting us off from contact with our fellow human beings.

The world of business is one area in which technology is isolating us. Many people now work alone at home. With access to a large central computer, employees such as secretaries, insurance agents, and accountants do their **chores** at display terminals in their own homes. They no longer actually have to see the people they're dealing with. In addition, employees are often paid in an impersonal way. Workers' salaries are automatically credited to their bank accounts, eliminating the need for pay checks. Fewer people stand in line with their **coworkers** to receive their pay or cash their checks. Finally, personal banking is becoming a detached process. Customers interact with machines rather than with people to deposit or withdraw money from their accounts. Even some bank loans are approved or rejected, not in an interview with a loan officer, but through a display on a computer screen.

Another area that technology is changing is entertainment. Music, for instance, was once a group experience. People listened to music in concert halls or at small social gatherings. For many people now, however, music is a **solitary** experience. Walking along the street or sitting at their living rooms, they wear headphones to build a wall of music around them. Movie entertainment is changing, too. Movies used to be social events. Now, some people are not going out to see a movie. Some are choosing to wait for a film to appear on cable television. Instead of being involved with the laughter, applause, or hisses of the audience, viewers watch movies in the isolation of their own living rooms.

Education is the third important area in which technology is separating us from others. From elementary schools to colleges, students spend more and more time sitting by themselves in front of computers. The computers give them feedback, while teachers spend more time tending the computers and less time interacting with their classes. A similar problem occurs in homes. As more families buy computers, increasing number of students practice their math and reading skills with software programs instead of with their friends, brothers and sisters and parents. Last, **alienation** is occurring as a result of another high-tech invention, DVDs. People are buying DVDs on subjects such as cooking, real state investment, speaking and speeding-reading. They then practice their skills at home rather than by taking group classes in which a rich human interaction can occur.

Technology, then, seems to be driving human being apart. Soon, we may no longer need to communicate with other human beings in order to do our work, entertain ourselves, or pursue education. Machines will be the coworkers and companions of the future.

Task 1: After reading the text, answer the questions below.

1. The aim of the writer is to:
 - A. make a technical concept understandable
 - B. describe an object, process or place
 - C. persuade someone to believe as they do

D. explain how to do something

2. Which audience is the author of this text most likely addressing?

3. What is the position of the writer towards the topic?

4. What will be the possible title for this reading text?

5. List down the three areas influenced by technology.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

6. What is the verb tense the writer has frequently used in this text? Why?

7. Who is the writer of this text?

8. What are the transitional markers the writer used to link paragraphs and sentences?

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

Task 2: Match the following words /phrases with words having the same or nearly the same meanings printed in bold in the reading text.

_____ 1. regular tasks

_____ 2. same place of job

_____ 3. done alone

_____ 4. representative

_____ 5. exclusion

Task 3: What do you think the following words in the reading text refer to?

_____ 1. Us (para. 1) _____ 2. Their (para. 2, line 3)

_____ 3. Their (para. 3, line 7) _____ 4. We (para. 5)