

Check your ECCE Reading Skills – Part 1 - Activity 3

Key and Item Analysis

This passage is about the Internet.

Technologists believe that the Internet will soon become the infinite connection through wireless, allowing people to gain access to their company network from almost anywhere. In the not so far future we won't even think about 'connecting' to the Internet. According to recent research we will be able to 'think' about a topic and the brainwaves will make the request.

Yet how will we cope with this vast amount of information and the speed at which it is delivered? Apparently the experts believe that our brains will adjust to receiving and digesting information from multiple sources. Children who play video games are already skilled at processing information this way. In the future we and the World Wide Web will chat, decide and ponder all at the same time. But the Internet of the future will not just be communication between people; machines will be talking to each other as well. For example, technologists have already invented a system for your refrigerator to read the bar codes of the milk carton and other items so that when it is time to re-order it will automatically add them to the Internet grocery list. Even your radio at home can have a wireless net connection that will make your life more organized. It receives notices of any traffic jams on your route to work, calculates extra commute time and then notifies you of the time you should leave.

Already the Internet is an essential tool for many people. Experts believe that in the future anything with a digital heartbeat will be connected to the Internet. Who knows, this might in fact happen. But to what extent will technology control our lives? Making technological predictions can be fun, but as we know from experience these predictions almost always fall short of the mark.

Item Difficulty: Moderate

1. What is the main idea of the passage?

- A. How to use the Internet.
- B. Technological predictions.
- C. Communication between people and machines.
- D. Experts' advice on the Internet.

Answer: B

Explanation: The correct answer is B. Throughout the text, the author talks about the predictions that scientists have made concerning the Internet: "Technologists believe that the Internet will soon become the infinite connection through wireless" "... we will be able to 'think' about a topic and the brainwaves will make the request..." "In the future we and the World Wide Web will chat" "Experts believe that in the future anything with a digital heartbeat will be connected to the Internet."

Item Difficulty: Moderate

2. When do researchers say we will be able to access the Internet with brainwaves?

- A. probably sooner than we think
- B. when the internet becomes an essential tool
- C. far into the future
- D. when we can cope with receiving a vast amount of information

Answer: A

Explanation: The correct answer is A. The expression "in the not so far future" emphasizes that something will happen in the near future: "In the not so far future we won't even think about 'connecting' to the Internet... we will be able to 'think' about a topic and the brainwaves will make the request."

Item Difficulty: More challenging

3. What is the author concerned about?

- A. that children will use the Internet too much
- B. how we will process information in the future
- C. information from different sources
- D. that too many people will be using the world wide-web

Answer: B

Explanation: The correct answer is B. The second paragraph begins with the author questioning how mankind will be able to handle the processing of information in the future : "Yet how will we cope with this vast amount of information ... ?" The fact that the author is questioning information processing shows that he is concerned about it.

Item Difficulty: More challenging

4. In line 2 of the last paragraph, what does "this" refer to?

- A. the future of the internet
- B. controlling technology
- C. connecting all digital things to the Internet
- D. believing the experts

Answer: C

Explanation: The correct answer is C. In the sentence "this might in fact happen", the word "this" refers to 'what' might in fact happen. The previous sentence states that in the future everything digital will be connected to the Internet. Thus, connecting all digital things to the internet is 'what' might happen in the future: "Experts believe that in the future anything with a digital heartbeat will be connected to the Internet. Who knows, this might in fact happen."

Item Difficulty: More challenging

5. What does the author of the passage think about the future of technology?

- A. It is fun.
- B. It will control our lives.
- C. It might not develop in the way we think.
- D. It will focus on communication between people.

Answer: C

Explanation: The correct answer is C. The author states that technological predictions almost always do not come out the way we expect them to: "Making technological predictions can be fun, but as we know from experience these predictions almost always fall short of the mark."