Grammar

The passive

1 How are passive verbs formed? Compare these two sentences.

Active: They showed the subjects images of cars, tools, guns, houses and landscapes.

Passive: The subjects were shown images of cars, tools, guns, houses and landscapes.

2 Underline the passive verbs in these extracts from Listening Part 2.

a The subjects were asked to indicate whether each image they saw was new or repeated.

b Faces are handled differently by the brain from other objects.

c It has been shown in experiments that people with face-blindness can be taught to improve their face recognition skills.

Discuss these questions.

1 In which extract above is the doer of the action (the 'agent') mentioned?
2 Who or what could be the agents in the other extracts?
3 Why is the agent not mentioned in these extracts? (There are several possible reasons.)
4 Would you be more likely to find passive verbs
- in an email to a friend or an essay?
- in a scientific report or a magazine story?
- in a personal anecdote or a job application?

Change these active sentences into the passive form. Only include an agent if you think it is important.

1 Over a million people have watched this YouTube clip.
2 They made the film over twenty years ago.
3 At the time no one had seen anything like it.
4 Apparently, they are making a new version of the film at the moment.
5 They are going to release it next year.

In formal writing we often begin sentences with *It* + passive, especially if we want to focus attention on ideas and arguments, e.g. *It has been shown* in Exercise 2, extract c. Work in pairs to complete these beginnings with your own ideas. Choose any subject you find interesting.

1 It is commonly believed that …
2 It has been reported in the last few days that …
3 It has been proved beyond doubt that …

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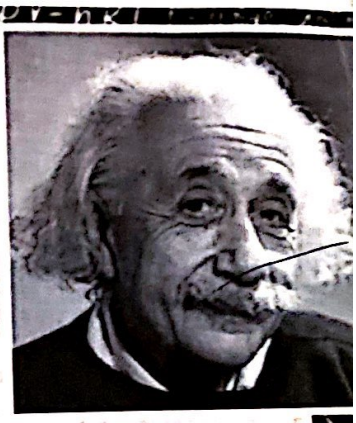
6 Rewrite this text using passive verbs to replace the underlined active verbs. Only include an agent if you think it is important. Use one verb with *it*, as in Exercise 5.

Example: 1 A new study on Albert Einstein has been completed …

An expert (1) has completed a new study on Albert Einstein and she (2) will publish it next month in a journal on neurology. The study suggests that a uniquely shaped brain (3) may have influenced Einstein's extraordinary genius. When anthropologist Dean Falk and her team made a comparison with 85 'normal' human brains, (4) they found that Einstein's brain possessed some remarkable features.



The researchers were using 14 photos of the genius's brain which people (5) had only recently rediscovered. With permission from his family, scientists (6) removed and photographed Einstein's brain after his death in 1955. The National Museum of Health and Medicine (7) hold the photographs but people (8) had never fully investigated them before.

Reading and Use of English | Part 5

Exam information

In Reading and Use of English Part 5 you have to
- read a text of 650–750 words
- answer six questions about it by choosing A, B, C or D.

This part tests your ability to understand the main ideas and purpose of the text and the writer's opinions or attitude, and to understand text organisation features such as exemplification.

1 You are going to read an article about how digital technology is affecting people's lives. Before you read: how does it affect your life? Make a list of the ways you use digital technology. Then compare lists with a partner and discuss how important this technology is in your lives.

Examples: smart phone apps, downloading music, films or podcasts, creating a website …

2 Read this article quickly and decide whether you are more like Emily Feld or her mother, Christine.

The next step in brain evolution

Emily Feld is a native of a new planet. While the 20-year-old university student may appear to live in London, she actually spends much of her time in another galaxy – in the digital universe of websites, e-mails, smart phones and social networking sites. The behaviour of Emily and her generation, say experts, is being shaped by digital technology as never before. It may even be the next step in evolution, transforming our brains and the way we think.

'First thing every morning I check my mobile for messages, have a coffee and then go on Twitter,' says Emily. 'I look at Facebook, my favourite social networking site, update my status, add any photos and interesting articles or music clips I've found. And I've got about 300 friends so there are always messages to read and reply to. Then I'll browse the Internet, and if a news article on Google catches my eye, I'll read it.

'The other day, I went to meet a friend in town and realised I'd left my mobile at home. I felt so lost without it that I panicked and went back to collect it. I need to have it on me at all times. Technology is an essential part of my everyday life. I don't know where I'd be without it.'

That's what makes Emily a 'digital native', someone who has never known a world without instant communication. Her mother Christine, on the other hand, is a 'digital immigrant', still coming to terms with a culture ruled by the ring of a mobile and the zip of text messages. Though 55-year-old Christine happily shops online and e-mails friends, at heart she's still in the old world. 'Children today are permanently multitasking – downloading tracks, uploading photos, texting. It's non-stop,' she says. 'They find sitting down and reading, even watching TV, too slow and boring.'

Are digital natives like Emily charting a new course for human intelligence? Many parents fear that children who spend hours glued to computer screens will end up as zombies with the attention span of an insect. Cyberspace is full of junk, they worry, and computer games are packed with mindless violence. But it need not be like that, say some experts, and increasingly it isn't, as users exert more control and discrimination.

The sheer mass of information in the modern world is forcing digital natives to make choices that those who grew up with only books and television did not have to make. 'Younger people sift more and filter more,' says Helen Petrie, a professor of human–computer interaction. 'We have more information to deal with, and we pay less

attention to particular bits of information, so it may that attention spans are shorter.'

The question, then, is how do digital natives learn discriminate, and what determines the things tha interest them? Parents who hope that skills, value limits are instilled at school may be fighting a los battle. According to some educationalists, the re why many children today do not pay attention in that they find teaching methods dull compared v digital experiences. Instead, parameters are incr set by 'wiki-thinking', peer groups exchanging i through digital networks. Just as the online ency Wikipedia has been built from the collective kno thousands of contributors, so digital natives dra experience and advice of online communities to their interests.

Where is this all leading? Only one thing seems changes propelled by the digital world are just h Indeed, apart from age, one of the differences b natives and the immigrants is the intuitive acc rapid digital change. Parents may use the Inter as their children, but what they are not used to upgrading. The younger generation are much m to replacing old technology. Faster broadband s smaller hardware – innovation is happening at that what was science fiction a few years ago v fact.

Anecdotally, it seems, a lot of natives in this di culture are adept at multitasking, doing severa simultaneously. But nobody knows exactly wh effect will be. In a sense, we are running a gra experiment. We're bringing up a whole genera totally new environment – without any firm ev how they will be affected.

Adapted from *The Times online*

3 Read the article again and for questions 1–6, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the article.

1 Why are the first three paragraphs of the article devoted to Emily Feld?
B
A She is particularly interested in technology.
B She is a typical university student.
C She is a representative of people of her age.
D She is studying the effects of digital technology on students.

2 How would you sum up Emily's relationship with digital technology?
C
A She is completely dependent on it.
B She uses it mainly to support her academic studies.
C It provides her with a meaningful social life.
D It is useful but she could live without it.

3 How is Emily's mother different from her daughter?
A She is very uncomfortable using digital technology.
C B She rarely uses digital technology.
C She is still adjusting to digital technology.
D She prefers reading or watching TV.

4 Some parents worry that continued exposure to digital technology will result in children
D
A becoming uncontrollable and violent.
B becoming too reliant on technology.
C being unable to discriminate between right and wrong.
D losing the ability to pay attention for more than a few seconds.

5 Educationalists believe that digital natives may be developing their ideas and interests from
C
A older family members.
B online encyclopedias like Wikipedia.
C internet contacts of their own age.
D schools and teachers.

6 What, according to the writer, is the only certainty with regard to the future of digital technology?
A
A Children will always be happier with digital technology than their parents.
B The world is at the start of the digital age.
C Everybody will need to become accustomed to multitasking.
D People will accept that digital technology is changing their world.

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