

Task 1

Read quickly through the task. What is the Part 1 task?

Part 1

Read the two texts below.

Write an essay summarising and evaluating the key points from both texts. Use your own words throughout as far as possible, and include your own ideas in your answers.

Write your answer in 240–280 words on the separate answer sheet.

Does memory have a future?

A good memory is invaluable. The inability to make use of memory and past experience can be a severe limitation on how well we perform both mentally and physically. Nowadays, we rely on computers, mobiles and other electronic devices to store our most important information, which can be recalled at the touch of a button. However, some people are concerned that this reliance on electronic equipment may affect the development of our internal memory system in the future. It remains to be seen whether these concerns turn out to be true.

The role of memory

We like to think of our memory as our record of the past, but all too often memories are influenced by imagination. It is risky, therefore, to regard memory as a source of knowledge, because we will never be able to verify the accuracy of a memory fully. Although memory is an unreliable source of knowledge about the past, its importance in self-identity is unquestionable. When a person suffers memory loss as a result of accident or illness, one of the most distressing consequences is likely to be a loss of self. Indeed, it can be argued that a person's true identity resides in his or her collection of memories.

Write your **essay**.

Task 2

Read this candidate's answer. What's your overall impression?

Sample answer 1

The extensive use of electronic devices has had, and continues to have, an effect on our daily lives similar to that of the mechanical press back in Gutemberg's time: the ability to storage information somewhere other than our brains. This, though arguably positive, has a downside that some people have pointed out: we don't get, or at least we're not forced to, exercise our memory as much as our Facebook deprived ancestor's did.

Some might argue that this is not an issue worth losing sleep over, after all, the human brain is not divided in watertight compartments which we can put our memories in, and thus our imagination can easily influence our recollection of the past, to the point that said recollection is no longer entirely accurate. For example, a historian would much rather base his or her research on any physical record of a specific event than on the personal retelling of said event made by a witness.

However, losing the ability to accurately describe events form the past is not what those who have voiced their concerns about the overuse of electronics to storage information are worried about the most. In actuality, the most misfortunate consequence of a potential worsening of human memory would be the loss of resources to build and maintain a strong self-identity.

Of course, one is more likely to lose significant chunks of their memory by means of accident or illness, and claiming that an excessive use of electronics will inevitably lead to a collective crisis of identity would be blowing things out of proportion. But, at the same time, one can't help but wonder how this increasingly interconnected world will continue to sharpen our brains.