

II. Read the following passage carefully. (8 marks)

1. It's 10 p.m. and the research paper is due the next morning. Sam types frantically. Two weeks ago, it seemed that there was plenty of time to get the paper done. Last week, the final of a soccer match on TV made it hard to study. Now, it's crunch time. Looking at the clock, Sam wonders, "Why do I keep doing this to myself? Why haven't I learned not to put things off until the last minute?"

2. The word procrastination comes from the Latin term 'Procrastinatus'. It means to put forward until tomorrow. Standard dictionary definitions all include the idea of postponement or delay. Steel, a psychologist who has reviewed hundreds of studies on the subject, states that to procrastinate is "to voluntarily delay an intended course of action despite expecting to be worse-off for the delay".

3. Another expert, Dr Joseph R. Ferrari (2005) distinguishes between people who tend to put things off and “chronic” or “real” procrastinators for whom this is their life and who might even need therapy. Ferrari categorises procrastinators into three types: (a) stimulation types that get a thrill from beating a deadline, (b) avoiders put off doing things that might make others think badly of them, and (c) decisional procrastinators postpone making a decision until they have enough information to avoid making a wrong choice.

4. Chronic procrastinators tend to have a low self-esteem and focus on the past more than the future. The Discounted Expectancy Theory illustrates with a student like Sam who puts off writing a paper. When the deadline is far off, the rewards for socialising now are greater than those for finishing a task not due until later. As the deadline looms, the rewards or consequences for finishing the paper become more important.

5. Tice and Baumeister (1997) found that procrastinators on the average got lower grades and had higher levels of stress and illness. Chu and Choi (2005) however, say that not all procrastinators are lazy and undisciplined. "Passive procrastinators" are more stressed, and less efficient. "Active procrastinators prefer to work under pressure" and "if something unexpectedly comes up, they will knowingly switch gears and engage in new tasks they perceive as more urgent."

(a) On the basis of your reading of the passage, make notes on it, using headings and sub-headings. Use recognizable abbreviations, wherever necessary. Give the passage a suitable title. (4 marks)

(b) Write a summary of the notes prepared, in not more than 80 words. (4 marks)