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Name:

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ENGLISH EXAM

Final mark = [Reading Comp: /20 + Grammar: /20 + Essay: /20] /3 =..... /20

Fact or Fiction? The Top 5 Laptop Myths

By Christopher Snow December 19th, 2013

There are plenty of things to fear in life — however your laptop shouldn't be one of them.

1) For every new technology that comes along, there will always be someone to fear it. Luddites feared power looms, those guys in tinfoil hats feared mobile phones, and now privacy rights activists fear drones — but the humble laptop computer? Surely there's no mystery left in these ubiquitous devices, is there? Would we be writing this if there weren't? Fear tends to stem from the unknown, so to curb that here are the most resilient myths regarding them — up to you to decide whether or not you should continue to live in fear of an inanimate object.

2) **One.** Laptops Make You Sterile : The notion that laptop computers can affect a man's virility seems to have two distinct versions: One blames radiation, while the other blames temperature. Both blame close proximity to one very important part of the male body — the reproductive organs. The radiation argument has been spurred on by a recent study in which researchers put a laptop with an active WiFi connection over a tray of male reproductive material. A similar tray was left under a laptop without a WiFi connection. The result? The WiFi-adjacent swimmers showed less movement and more DNA damage. Ergo, WiFi kills your virility, right? Not so fast. According to noted fertility expert Dr. Allan Pacey, the results of the study are questionable because the sperm in the study didn't enjoy the benefit of the human body's protective cocoon. "We need large epidemiological studies to determine whether WiFi poses a risk to fertility, and to my knowledge these have not yet been performed." Keeping these areas well-ventilated goes a long way toward heading off any potential damage. Still, if you're really worried about it, use a table. As for heat, the arguments are mixed. It's well known that a rise in temperature — regardless of the source — negatively affects sperm production. It's a phenomenon that's been observed in bicyclists, runners, and hot tub enthusiasts. So keeping a powerful laptop close to your crotch may indeed impair reproductive material production. But it's important to remember that these effects are temporary, and in large part determined by the user's sitting position.

3) **Two.** Laptops are Watching You : Come on, your laptop isn't watching you. Get it right: *Other people* are watching you, using your laptop's web cam. Don't you feel better now? Yes, there's some truth to this one. A malicious attacker with a lot of know-how could gain control of your laptop's webcam and use it for all sorts of embarrassing purposes. But it takes a little participation on your end. Like most electronic invasions of privacy, this trick requires one of two techniques: deception, or physical access to your computer. Bottom line: Don't be fooled by sketchy websites or downloads, and keep your laptop away from creepy characters in the real world too.

4) **Three.** Magnets Will Erase Your Important Data : Your secret financial data, your treasured family photos, your entire 5 GB collection of hilarious cat GIFs... all of these are at the mercy of an unfortunately placed magnet. Or so goes the myth. And what kind of magnet is liable to cause such indiscriminate data devastation? Nothing more than a hard to come by, 1.5 Tesla MRI-caliber superconductive electromagnet. So no, a household magnet cannot overcome the extensive shielding of a modern hard disk drive. Therefore, your data is safe. What you *should* be careful of unshielded magnetic strips like hotel key cards, which can be erased simply by placing them too near a cell phone! But solid state drives found in iPads, smartphones and expensive laptops don't use magnetic data storage, making them almost totally immune to the erasing effect of magnets.

5) **Four.** Laptops Should Be Turned Off When Not In Use : The fear of squandering one's investment in a fancy new laptop is certainly further down the list of technological terrors than, say, impotence, spying, or the loss of all electronic data. Still, these myths persist. Nowadays, we use lithium batteries, and they've got a two- or three-year lifespan regardless of how often they're discharged. First, let's discuss the idea that laptops should be unplugged and run down to an empty battery once per month. That's a myth. It used to be true around five or ten years ago, when most laptops used nickel-metal hydride batteries that were susceptible to the well-known "memory effect," which decreased their longevity. Nowadays, for almost all consumer tech we use lithium batteries having a two- or three-year lifespan regardless of how often they're discharged. Second, there's the idea that laptops should be turned off when they're not in use. This one is partially true. Circuit boards do wear out and corrode with time, but that's almost never the first physical problem with a PC's internals. Dust becomes a factor long before corrosion. Some laptops are more susceptible to dust than others. Bad things can happen when your laptop's internals get clogged with dust. "Actively cooled" laptops use little fans to keep components from overheating. But the dust in the air comes along for the ride. These computers should be powered down when not in use. "Passively cooled" laptops use heat sinks and conduction to keep components cool. These laptops are less susceptible to dust and can be left on indefinitely. Just make sure you keep the lid down to prevent the screen from aging prematurely. How can you tell whether your laptop is actively or passively cooled? Chances are, yours is actively cooled. Does your computer have any visible vents? Active. Does it get louder when you do processor-intensive things like gaming or watching an HD movie? Active.

6) **Five.** Macs are Immune to Viruses : Myth!. Remember earlier, when we told you to avoid sketchy websites and downloads? You still need to do that if you're using a Mac. This myth promotes exactly the kind of cavalier attitude that gets people into trouble. Computer viruses, like biological ones, are most "successful" when they replicate themselves and pass from person to person. The easiest way to do this is to start with the largest possible group of people to infect. Over 90% of all desktop and laptop computers are running a Microsoft Windows operating system, so this group is the one virus authors overwhelmingly code for. Thus nothing about a Mac laptop makes it inherently virus-free. The issue is popularity, not immunity, therefore a whole population of Mac users could easily be caught napping by an enterprising hacker. It's fair to say that Macs are less frequently stricken with malicious software. But *immune*? No way!

I. READING COMPREHENSION

(/20)

A. Read the article **"Fact or Fiction? The Top 5 Laptop Myths"** By Christopher Snow and then choose the response which best completes the following sentences by circling (*entourer*) the appropriate letter, A,B,C or D. There is only one correct response for each statement.

(/10)

1) *According to the author, a new item of technology*

- a) often makes us think of the luddites.
- b) is sure to make him write an article about it.
- c) leads to an animated respect of the inanimate object.
- d) is always accompanied by some anxiety or fear.

2) *Sterility caused by laptops*

- a) is uniquely a problem of temperature and proximity to certain parts of the body.
- b) is exclusively due to the WiFi.
- c) involves high temperatures being close to reproductive organs as well as radiation.
- d) is uniquely due to radiation in close proximity to the reproductive organs.

3) *The argument of sterility caused by laptops has been questioned because*

- a) male reproductive material was put into artificial cocoons.
- b) the laptops were not well ventilated.
- c) extensive epidemiological studies and well ventilating certain body areas were not taken into account.
- d) Dr. Allan Pacey was incompetent.

4) *If your laptop has a webcam, you*

- a) need to pay particular attention to what you upload onto sketchy websites.
- b) need to be careful of who you allow to use it and of potentially dangerous websites and downloads.
- c) need to make sure the bottom line only concerns the real world.
- d) hardly need to worry about malicious attackers with a lot of know-how who could gain control of it.

5) *The risk of data being erased on your PC due to magnet fields*

- a) will probably never happen if you have an upscale brand name and model.
- b) is likely if you have a large number of magnets in your house that are in close proximity to it.
- c) can only happen if your hard drive is shielded.
- d) would only happen if it was in close contact with a hotel key card or your cell phone.

6) *A 1.5 Tesla MRI-caliber superconductive electromagnet*

- a) can erase a computer's hard drive.
- b) is a new type of hard drive.
- c) is found in many household devices.
- d) might be able to erase a computer's hard drive.

7) *Preserving battery life is*

- a) one of the top concerns on a PC user's list of worries.
- b) only important if one wants to squander his investment.
- c) one way to prevent impotence and spying.
- d) no longer much of an issue now that lithium batteries are used.

8) *Unplugging laptops once a month*

- a) decreases the longevity of lithium batteries.
- b) to let the battery discharge prevents the memory effect for pre-lithium type batteries.
- c) for the first five or ten years that you have them increases battery life.
- d) has no effect on nickel-metal hydride batteries no matter how many times they are discharged.

9) *Consumer high-tech goods today,*

- a) unlike previous models, only last approximately five years.
- b) unfortunately, will need a new nickel-metal hydride battery after approximately three years.
- c) with very few exceptions, use batteries that last approximately three years.
- d) which are frequently discharged and charged, will need to be replaced after approximately three years.

10) *It is often said that you should not leave your computer turned on when it is not in use*

- a) because doing so will cause your circuit board to wear out before your battery does.
- b) because dust will eventually obstruct its enclosed components.
- c) because dust will soon prevent your battery from charging.
- d) because passive dust can cause the outside of your computer to corrode.

B. Answer the following questions in your own words.

(/ 6)

- 1) Do you agree with what the author of the article says in paragraph 2 concerning webcams and being watched by your PC? Explain

- 2) Explain (in your own words) why actively cooled laptops are more susceptible to the dangers of dust than passively cooled ones are.

C. Choose the correct definition, a, b, c or d for the words given below.

(/ 4)

- 1) In paragraph one, the word **Luddites** means :

a) imaginary people who flew in drones
b) small insects that would infest hats left in people's closets
c) people who were afraid of technological advances
d) people who had a fear of looms and weaving

- 2) **Tinfoil** in paragraph one means :

a) a fabric that most hats are made out of
b) aluminum in the form of paper-thin sheets
c) thick pieces of steel used to protect the head
d) a nickname for the first users of cell phones

- 3) **Spurred** in paragraph two probably means :

a) a sharp object used to make a horse move
b) having urged something to move forward
c) having criticized or discouraged
d) having abandoned or left behind

- 4) **Heading off** in paragraph two probably means :

a) avoiding something bad in the future by acting now
b) taking off someone's head
c) stimulating, encouraging something to happen
d) removing the first part of a study

- 5) In paragraph three, **Malicious** means :

a) having, showing a desire to cause harm to someone
b) a nice guy who means no harm
c) the male in any animal species who is the hunter
d) a tribe of people planning an attack

- 6) In paragraph five, **heatsinks** means :

a) large hot pools of water that people can bath in
b) holes in the ground that are very hot
c) chilling devices used to absorb warmth
d) recipients used for washing up

- 7) In paragraph six, **cavalier** means :

a) a man who is good at horsemanship
b) confident disregard, disdain for something
c) a basketball player for the team with the same name
d) being very careful, and listening to advice

- 8) In paragraph six, **caught napping** means :

a) a Mac user who has been found using a PC
b) having been interrupted during you siesta
c) having been taken by surprise, not aware, off guard
d) to be arrested for illegal downloading

II. GRAMMAR

(/ 20)

A. THE PASSIVE VOICE

1-Find two sentences in the passive voice in the text.

/2

- a).....
.....
- b).....
.....

2-Put the following sentences (taken from the text) in the passive voice.

/3

- a) Laptops are Watching You.
.....
- b) A malicious attacker could gain control of your laptop's webcam.
.....
.....
- c) A household magnet cannot overcome the extensive shielding of a modern hard disk drive.
.....
.....

3-Rewrite the following sentences beginning with the word(s) in bold. You will need to put the underlined parts of these sentences in the passive voice.

/5

- a) People often believe that nuclear energy remains the best option to produce electricity.
It.....
.....
- b) Many NGOs have given governments a warning that nuclear plants could be the source of tremendous catastrophes.
Governments.....
.....
- c) Experts have detected plutonium in soil samples taken from around Fukushima nuclear power plant.
Plutonium.....
.....
- d) On February 23rd, officials declared that babies couldn't drink Tokyo tap water.
Tokyo tap water.....
.....
- e) The media showed workers struggling to regain control of the nuclear plant.
Workers.....
.....

B. VERB FORM : INFINITIVE OR -ING

1-Fill in the following with the appropriate verb form :

/5

- a) I'd advise (leave).....the car here and (walk).....to the restaurant.
- b) Remember (phone).....your father when you arrive or else he will be mad.
- c) They stopped (listen).....to the birds: how beautifully they sang!
- d) Exploring new energy sources will mean (give up).....what has been invested on for 50 years.

2-Circle the letter corresponding to the correct answer:

/3

1) After her famous husband's death, Eleanor Roosevelt continuedfor peace.

- a- working
- b- work
- c- the working
- d- to working

2) We regretyou that your request has been rejected.

- a- informing
- d- to inform
- c- informed
- c- to informing

3) I look forwardyou next week.

- a- meet
- b- meeting
- c- to meeting
- d- will meet

3-The following sentences contain one mistake. Select and circle the letter corresponding to the mistake and give the correct form. (...../2)

1. We should have been informed Janis about the change in plans regarding our weekend trip to the mountains.

A

B

C

D

2. Mary usually arrives at the office at nine o'clock, but because the strike, she was two hours late.

A

B

C

D

(/ 20)

1) Can you think of any laptop myths which are important and should be included on this list and/or criticisms of the conclusions the author draws? Explain why these things are important, what the risks are and what the user can do to protect himself.

3) Choose one scientific or technological improvement or else one phenomenon that you find particularly important in today's world. Discuss its advantages and possible drawbacks. Suggest some solutions to respond to its downsides.

[illegible]

