Reading Comprehension: Lesson 2

People are scared of artificial intelligence – here is why we should embrace it instead

Artificial intelligence (AI) has gained widespread attention in recent years. AI is viewed as a strategic technology to lead us into the future. Yet, when interacting with academics, industry leaders and policy-makers alike, there are some growing concerns around the uncertainty of this technology. These concerns can be categorized into three perspectives, firstly, many people lack
5   a full understanding of AI and therefore are more likely to view it as a nebulous cloud. Secondly, some companies or individuals worry that they will fall behind as AI becomes more predominant. Thirdly, AI is increasingly used without policy and regulations.

First of all, we should democratize AI. This means that instead of treating AI as a too complicated term for the average person to understand, we should seek to make AI accessible to everyone in
10   society. It should not be just the scientists and engineers who understand it. Through adequate education, communication and collaboration, people will understand the potential value that AI can create for the community.

Then, in AI no one will be "left behind". Technology should belong to and benefit all of society; and we should be realistic about where we are in AI's development. A lot of progress in AI has
15   been made. But if we think of it as a vast ocean, we are still only walking on the beach. Most of the achievements we have made are, in fact, based on having a huge amount of data, rather than on AI's ability to be intelligent on its own. From this point of view, society has only just started its long journey with AI.

Last, we should take an agile approach to the governance of AI. We can benefit from AI
20   innovation while we are figuring out how to regulate the technology. We need regulations so society can obtain benefits from new technologies like AI and we need to work together as a global community to establish and implement them. To conclude, we can say that innovation is a marathon, not a sprint. If we are willing to belong to this revolution and if we embrace AI innovation, the value AI can create could far exceed our expectations.

25   Adapted from: https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/02/where-is-artificial-intelligence-going/

Skimming

Choose from the list A-E the main idea for paragraphs 1-4. There is one extra letter that you **do not** need to use.

A. Rules are necessary to use new technologies such as AI in a safe way.

B. The concept of AI should be simple so ordinary people can understand it easily.

C. AI will be implemented in all fields of knowledge very soon.

D. AI has gained a lot of attention lately, but it still brings along some worries.

E. We have just started working on the development of AI

Scanning

1. What does AI stand for?
   a. Artificial Information
   b. Artificial Intelligence
   c. Artificial Imagination

2. Who are worried about AI fast growing?
   a. Industry leaders and policy-makers
   b. Academics
   c. All of the above

3. How can AI be "democratized"?
   a. Information about AI has to be easy to understand by ordinary people.
   b. Information about AI has to be restricted.
   c. Citizens have to study about it.

4. Who is going to benefit by AI's development?
   a. Everybody
   b. Anybody
   c. Only some people

5. We need regulations …
   a. To stop the fast growing of new technologies
   b. To obtain the benefits of AI in a safe way
   c. To delay new technologies

Vocabulary

1. The adjective "strategic" in line 2 can be replaced by
   a. tactical
   b. difficult
   c. unnecessary
   d. developed

2. The adverb "alike" in line 3 can be understood as:
   a. something unexpected
   b. in a different way
   c. in a similar way
   d. none of the above

3. The verb "lack" in line 4 means:
   a. not have a lot
   b. not have
   c. have just a few
   d. not have options

4. The verb "seek" in line 9 means:
   a. avoid
   b. ask for
   c. see
   d. try

5. The noun "progress" in line 15 can be replaced by:
   a. advancement
   b. drawback
   c. divergence
   d. deviation

Reference

1. What does the demonstrative pronoun "this" in line 8 stand for?

2. What does the subject pronoun "we", in line 14 refer to?

3. What does the object pronoun "it" in line 15 imply?

4. What does the object pronoun "them" in line 22 indicate?

5. What does the noun phrase "this revolution" in line 23 mean?

Video watching:

Comprehension questions

1.   Which are the four issues/areas mentioned in the video that could be improved through the use of AI?

2.   Which important internet company is mentioned in the video?

3.   How much energy has been reduced with the use of AI?

4.   What is the idea mentioned at the end of the video as regards the future of society?