

Reading Comprehension

Lesson 3



Computers are machines that can help us in many ways. But they cannot think or do things on their own. Humans have to feed them with information and tell them what to do with it. They cannot come up with any new information. But they can save much time and work. Forexample, all the information and the office files can be stored in a computer's "memory". If a clerk were to trace any information from a particular file, the computer would only take seconds to find it. It would take a clerk days or even weeks to go through every file if no computers were used.

The first computers were huge and costly. They filled up almost the whole floor of large offices. Later, because of the usefulness and demand for computers in business, scientists soon found ways to produce cheaper and smaller computers. They invented chips which made it possible to store more information in less space.

Currently, computers are not only cheaper, but also more compact. They can just be placed on top of an ordinary writing table. They can even be carried from place to place easily. Computers are not only used in offices by companies, but they are also used at home, by families who can afford them.

Robots, on the other hand, are not mechanical people. They are only moving parts controlled by a computer. A robot can do the same work for twenty four hours, and yet, it does not complain or get tired. In the United States robots are controlled by computers that tell them where to guard and what to do. These robots are programmed to listen for certain noises and signals for help in case of trouble or danger.

In Japan and in some places in America, robots are used in factories to assemble cars. As computers become more common in businesses and factories, people fear that one day computers and computer controlled robots will put human labourers out of work.

http://www.englishdaily626.com/reading_comprehension.php?032

Skimming

Choose from the list A-F the main idea for paragraphs 1-5. There is one extra letter that you do not need to use.

A. Old computers occupied very large spaces.

B. Computers are cheaper and smaller nowadays.

C. Computers cannot think or do things on their own.

D. Computers are told what to do by means of a limited set of instructions.

E. Workers are afraid that one day they will be replaced by robots.

F. Robots are moving parts controlled by a computer.

Vocabulary. Circle the letter of the best answer for each question

1. The verb “save” in line 3 can be understood as:
 - a. keep
 - b. recover
 - c. not waste
 - d. undo

2. The noun “files” in line 4 can be explained as:
 - a. information stored on a computer
 - b. part of the computer hardware
 - c. information fed on a computer
 - d. the main memory of a computer

3. The noun “chips” in line 10 can be described as:
 - a. food made of potato
 - b. a small integrated circuit
 - c. a tiny piece of wood
 - d. mark where a piece broke off

4. The verb “afford” in line 15 can be replaced by:
 - a. like
 - b. use
 - c. buy
 - d. discard

5. The noun phrase “moving parts” in line 16 can be understood as:
 - a. workers
 - b. managers
 - c. computers
 - d. equipment

Comprehension Questions

1. Why do humans have to feed the computers with information and tell them what to do?
 - a. Because computers can save time and work.
 - b. Because computers cannot think or do things on their own.
 - c. Because computers can store office information in their memory.
 - d. Because computers can help us in many ways.

2. Why did the first computers fill up almost the whole floor?
 - a. Because they were costly.
 - b. Because of the usefulness and demand for computers in businesses.
 - c. Because the office floor was small.
 - d. Because they were huge.

3. Find a word that has the same meaning as “more compact” in line 10.
 - a. Huge
 - b. Cheaper
 - c. Smaller
 - d. Costly

4. Which of the following statements is NOT TRUE?
 - a. Robots are controlled by a computer.
 - b. Robots are mechanical people.
 - c. Robots do not get tired of working.
 - d. Robots guard factories and museums in the United States.

5. Humans fear that one day computers and robots
 - a. will become busier than humans.
 - b. will become cleverer than humans.
 - c. will make humans jobless.
 - d. will make humans listen to certain noise.

6. The BEST title for this passage would be
 - a. Computers and Robots
 - b. Old and New Computers
 - c. Robots are Security Guards
 - d. The Electronic Invention

Reference .Write the referent word(s) at the end of each sentence.

1. What does the relative pronoun “that” in line 1 refer to?
2. What does the possessive adjective “their” in line 2 point to?
3. What does the object pronoun “it” in line 6 stand for?
4. What does the subject pronoun “they” in line 10 indicate?
5. What does the object pronoun “them” in line 15 refer to?
6. What does the subject pronoun “they” in line 16 imply?
7. What does the subject pronoun “it” in line 17 denote?
8. Find a verb in line 22 which has a similar meaning to the verb phrase “are afraid”.

Japanese scientists have made the world's first news-reading robots. They look, sound, and act like humans. The scientists showed two robots to reporters. One is called Kodomo, and the other is Otonari. The names use the English word android with the Japanese words for child and adult. They read news on a television. Robots are big business in Japan. Companies spend a lot of money on them. They try to make robots better. Japanese people like robots. They think they are helpful and cute. Westerners think robots are scary and worry they will take over the world. A professor said, “We will have more and more robots in our everyday lives in the future. He added, “Robots are now cheaper and are no different from a laptop.”

https://breakingnewsenglish.com/1406/140628-robots-separate_1.html

