

S4 Reading Comprehension

Week 4 – 24-28 February 2020

Topic: Thanks to Computers, University Students Don't Spell

Alex is a student at the University of Hong Kong. Although he is an English major, he does not spell well. There are many words that he cannot spell correctly, for example, 'phenomenon', 'enthusiastic' or even 'brain' and 'February'. Why? Because he doesn't have to. A university student doesn't have dictation anymore and when working on his assignments, he needs to be able to spell only part of the word because the computer will spell the rest for him. Even though he makes spelling mistakes, the 'spell-check' function of Microsoft Word will correct his errors automatically.

Nowadays, more and more students rely on computers when doing their homework. In fact, they are *required* to rely on computers. Some schools even computerise their examination systems. In other words, students no longer need to write as long as they can type. Most universities in Hong Kong encourage or require students to submit typed assignments. Professors and teachers prefer typed to handwritten assignments, which are mostly rejected. Gradually, students have become heavily dependent on computers. In case they don't have computers to use, they will have to express themselves through writing, often with a lot of misspellings.

Over-reliance on computers to do assignments results in another public complaint. It has been said that the handwriting of students in Hong Kong is getting worse, too. This is at least partly due to the increasing reliance on computers. The saying 'practice makes perfect' is always true. Without enough practice, students' handwriting becomes worse.

The problem not only applies to spelling and writing with the alphabet; it also affects the ability to write Chinese characters. Students have become too lazy to write Chinese. The typed Chinese characters are neater and it takes much longer time to write than to type. As a result, some students may have become incapable of writing even the simplest characters.

Undoubtedly, we enjoy much of the convenience of computerising our everyday lives. Computers have become something we can't do without. However, using computers does not mean that we can forget how to spell and write. The trend of using computers at work and school is not to be stopped. Yet, we should not give up knowing how to spell and write.

Answer the following based on information given in the passage.

Decide which of the following are **True** or **False**, or if the information is **Not Given** in the passage. Put a tick in **ONE** box only for each statement.

	True	False	Not Given
1. Alex majors in English at a university.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. University students always uses dictionary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Without the computers, the problem of misspellings among university students is serious.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The saying 'practice makes perfect' is outdated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Chinese writing requires less practice than English writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The sentences below are possible summaries for paragraphs 2, 3, 4 and 5. From the six sentences (A-F) below, choose the most suitable sentence for each paragraph and write the letter in the space provided.

- 6. Paragraph 2 _____
- 7. Paragraph 3 _____
- 8. Paragraph 4 _____
- 9. Paragraph 5 _____

- A. The writer hopes to stop student use of computers.
- B. Poor handwriting is another problem of using computers too often.
- C. The writer is disappointed about students being unable to write Chinese.
- D. The causes of students' dependence on computers today.
- E. Using computers makes students less able to write Chinese.
- F. The writer wishes to see students maintain their writing and spelling standard.

10. Do you also think that computers make us don't spell? Why?