

Part One: Reading Comprehension

(Score: 12/20)

Read the following selection in which the writer discusses the effects of the new machine age on human work and society, and then answer the questions that follow.

The Machine Age Is upon Us

- 1 What is good about shining technology if it steals our jobs and tears communities apart? The new machine age will change our understanding of work. Work is the way we contribute to society, a part of a social contract that holds our society together. We work, we build our society, and we benefit from its improvement and wealth. However, how will humans work or become rich in a world of robots?
- 2 Our social contract around work is broken. Back in the 1980s, many countries suffered from the destruction of their industrial capacities. This wave of globalization and the first fruits of the technological revolution destroyed industrial jobs or exported them to low-wage economies. The loss of work has had a devastating impact on many people. We must never forget the value of work because without it people are left with no sense of dignity and of community. When people lose work, they lose the meaning and purpose of life. In addition, research has shown that people are at greater risk of sickness, substance abuse, and other challenges due to loss of work. Families start breaking apart under the pressure of losing jobs, mental illness rises, and educational achievement collapses.
- 3 Recently, the Bank of England has predicted that 15 million people are at risk of losing their jobs through automation, which is based on the use of machines and computers without the need of human control. In addition, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development has forecasted that automation will affect 9% of jobs across countries. Whichever prediction proves correct, the future of work is going to be insecure. When we look into the future, we see science fiction becoming real. Some predict humanity will change more in the next 20 years than in the previous 300 ones. New machines are now speaking, seeing, hearing, analyzing, and writing. Worldwide well-known industrial companies have already replaced thousands of their workers with robots. In other words, robots are now cheaper than human beings who earn \$5 a day.
- 4 As a matter of fact, we do not know what will happen because there is little conclusive evidence. However, there is a talk about a post-work society and a call for a universal basic income, where the government sends out regular checks to everyone regardless of their earnings or employment. Some want to fund it by taxing robots, others by taxing the use of customer data. This is a sign that they are no longer thinking about fixing the social contract that binds our society. It is, also, a victory of the selfish individualism, where the society does not show responsibility for the poor, and the jobless are abandoned. As a result, workless people will be completely dependent on the government, but what **they** really want is to get back on their own feet and to provide for themselves.
- 5 Thus, our challenge is to make human work significant. We need to put people at the heart of successful business. In the new economy, our most valuable strength will be human beings. We have emotional intelligence and the ability to invent, understand, and reason in abstract ways. We can make imaginative leaps, and we have intuition. In the new economy, what will add value is what is already devalued: the emotional labor of caring, communicating, and connecting.
- 6 Some people believe that we will be able to achieve successful businesses in a failing society, but many others will be against this. They do not want shining technology in a run-down country. Thus, we need to work together on how we can best preserve human work and how we can employ new technologies to enhance human connection.
- 7 In this new digital age, we will need an education system that encourages our children to learn how to think creatively. We will need a system of skills that provides lifelong learning for all of us, so we can adapt to a fast-changing labor market. We will need a national infrastructure suitable for the 21st

century. Besides, we will need a new model of social security based on contribution that will enable each of us to acquire the strengths and capabilities required for our security and wealth, and much more. What we do not want is the end of work.

Questions

- A. Answer each of the following questions in 1-4 sentences of your own words.**
1. Based on Paragraph 2, state two negative effects of technology. (01)
 2. Based on Paragraph 3, explain why the role of humans in the labor market will change completely in the future. (01)
 3. Refer to Paragraph 4 to explain the difference between governments' plans and humans' needs. (01)
 4. In reference to Paragraph 7, deduce how a responsible society must view technology. (01)
- B. Answer the following questions in complete sentences.**
1. What two purposes does the introduction serve? Justify your answer. (01)
 2. What adjective best describes the tone in Paragraph 5? Justify your answer. (01)
 3. Identify two types of evidence the writer uses to achieve credibility. Provide examples. (1.5)
 4. Identify two types of audience, other than the general reader, that might be interested in reading the selection. Then state what interest each type finds in it. (1.5)
- C. Refer to Paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 to find words that almost have the following meanings (02)**
1. *highly destructive or damaging*
 2. *to fall down suddenly because of pressure*
 3. *not safe or uncertain*
 4. *proving that something is true or free from doubt*
- D. What does each of the following words, bold-typed in the selection above, refer to? (01)**
1. **ones** (Paragraph 3)
 2. **they** (Paragraph 4)

Part Two: Writing (Choose ONE of the two prompts below.) (Score: 08/20)

Prompt A: *The technological and social media advances of the past decade have led many people to be obsessed by checking their social media accounts. This, in turn, has affected their mental and physical health negatively.*

In a well-organized problem-solution essay of 250-300 words, discuss the problem of the excessive use of technology and social media, and then provide solutions that might prevent this problem.

Prompt B: *“The irony of our digital age is that we have more ‘friends’ and know more about their activities and interests than ever by spending less time with them.”*

Write a well-organized persuasive essay of 250-300 words in which you convince people who are always disconnected from the real world to make effort to disconnect from technology in order to enjoy real-life experiences and human interactions. Use appropriate pieces of evidence such as facts, real-life examples, etc.

[Content and organization of ideas (3.5), language and style (3.5), tidiness and legible handwriting (01)]

Q	Answer Key	Score
I-A-1	<p>First, technology destroys the contract between humans and society. Second, it destroys the jobs of industry or reduces the incomes of economies. Third, it makes people lose their sense of dignity, of community, and the meaning and purpose of life. Fourth, it causes risks such as sickness and substance abuse. Fifth, it breaks families' bonds, increases mental illness, and breakdowns the educational achievement.</p> <p>(two effects are required; 0.5 for each; deduct 0.25 for language errors)</p>	01
I-A-2	<p>The numbers and statistics predicted by the Bank of England and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development about humans losing jobs due to automation are very high, which means that the human role in the labor market will disappear in the future.</p> <p>Or: Lately, the world has witnessed a big leap in the field of robotics, where robots can act and behave like humans at cheaper costs, which means that replacing workers with robots will spread in all industrial companies in the future.</p> <p>(one explanation is enough; deduct 0.25 for language errors)</p>	01
I-A-3	<p>On one hand, governments are calling for a post-work society and a universal basic income, which limits the role and value of human work and increases the role of machines/robots. On the other hand, humans want to preserve the value of their work instead of being dependent on the government when losing their jobs.</p> <p>(0.5 for each side; deduct 0.25 for language errors)</p>	01
I-A-4	<p>As the writer explains in Paragraph 7, the society must focus on developing its education system, children's creativity, lifelong learning skills, 21st century infrastructure, social security, and strong human capabilities. Thus, it can be deduced that a responsible society is the one that does not view technology as the main source for achieving progress, development, or prosperity.</p> <p>(0.5 for the reasons and 0.5 for the deduced statement; any other logical deduced statement is accepted; deduct 0.25 for language errors)</p>	01
I-B-1	<p>First, the introduction presents the selection's main idea about the negative impact technology has on human jobs and society. Second, it provides background information about the topic under discussion: meaning of work (what humans contribute to society and the contract they have with it) and the negative effects of technology (stealing human jobs, tearing communities apart, and preventing humans from working or becoming rich). Third, it attracts the readers' attention through the facts provided about the meaning of work and the negative impact of technology (or through the questions raised about the negative impact of technology on human work and communities).</p> <p>(two purposes are required; 0.5 for each purpose with its justification)</p>	01

I-B-2	<p>The tone is <u>advising/guiding/recommending</u>, (or: <u>appreciative/admiring</u>), (or: <u>hopeful/optimistic</u>). The writer is <u>advising/guiding/recommending</u> when she/he lists the steps that should be taken in order to retain the value of human work: “our challenge is”, “We need to”, and “will add value”. In addition, the writer is <u>appreciative/admiring</u> towards humans when she/he lists the strengths humans have in contrast to robots: “most valuable strength”, “emotional intelligence”, and “ability to invent, understand, and reason in abstract ways”. The writer is <u>hopeful/optimistic</u> when she/he imagines/predicts great leaps in the new economy: “imaginative leaps”, “intuition”, and “will add value”.</p> <p>(one adjective/tone is enough; 0.5 for the tone and 0.5 for justification; any other accurate adjective/tone with its appropriate justification is acceptable)</p>	01
I-B-3	<p>First, the writer uses specific names (banks and organizations): “Bank of England” and the “Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development” (Paragraph 3). Second, the writer uses numbers and statistics: “20 years”, “300 ones”, and “9%” (Paragraph 3). Third, the writer uses dates: “Back in the 1980s” (Paragraph 2) and “for the 21st century” (Paragraph 7).</p> <p>(0.75 for each type with its examples; 0.25 for the type and 0.5 for the example or explanation; two types are required; any other accurate type with appropriate example is accepted)</p>	1.5
I-B-4	<p>First, officials at ministries of labor/ or human rights activists might be interested in reading the selection because it provides details about the injustice human workers suffer from due to automation (or due to the use of machines/robots instead of humans). Second, sociologists/psychologists might be interested in reading the selection because it provides details about the challenges/problems that jobless people suffer from, such as family breakdown, mental sickness, loss of life’s meaning and purpose, etc.</p> <p>(0.75 for each type with its interest/explanation; 0.25 for each type and 0.5 for its justification; any other logical answer is accepted)</p>	1.5
I-C-1	devastating	0.5
I-C-2	collapse (or collapses)	0.5
I-C-3	insecure	0.5
I-C-4	conclusive	0.5
I-D-1	“ones” refers to years	0.5
I-D-2	“they” refers to workless people (or people)	0.5
II-A	Content and organization	3.5
II-B	Language and style	3.5
II-C	Tidiness and handwriting	01