
Part I: Access to Information from Written Texts

Read the article below and then answer questions 1-6.

The Freedom to Choose: Is It Always a Good Thing?

(1) In the past, most people did not have much choice regarding their future careers. In many societies, children simply followed in their parents' footsteps. A farmer's son became a farmer, and a tailor's daughter became a tailor. While this limited personal freedom, it provided a clear path and reduced the stress of making big life decisions.

(6) Today, in most modern societies, young people enjoy the freedom to choose any profession they desire. With enough effort and education, a person can become anything from a software engineer to a professional chef. This shift is generally seen as a great victory for individual liberty. However, psychologists have recently discovered that having "too much" freedom can sometimes lead to unexpected problems.

(12) One major issue is what experts call "choice paralysis." When a student is faced with hundreds of different university degrees and career paths, the pressure to make the "perfect" choice can be overwhelming. Instead of feeling liberated, many young people feel anxious and stuck, worried that picking one path means they are missing out on something better.

(17) Furthermore, having total freedom of choice often leads to higher expectations. When we are free to choose our own path, we feel that we are solely responsible for our success or failure. If a person chooses a job and then finds it boring or difficult, they often blame themselves for making a "bad" decision. In the past, if you didn't like your job, you could blame tradition or your parents. Today, the burden of satisfaction lies entirely on the individual.

(24) Despite these challenges, nobody would want to return to the days of forced career paths. The key to handling modern freedom, experts say, is "satisficing"—a term that means looking for an option that is "good enough" rather than searching forever for the "perfect" one. By lowering our expectations slightly and accepting that no choice is perfect, we can finally enjoy the true benefits of being free.

Questions

1. What do we learn about career choices in the past from paragraph 1?

- i) They were based on what children wanted to do.
- ii) They were usually determined by the parents' profession.
- iii) They were more stressful than career choices today.
- iv) They required a lot of education and effort.

(8 points)

2. According to paragraph 2, why is the modern situation considered a "victory"?

ANSWER: _____

(9 points)

3. In paragraph 3, the writer mentions "choice paralysis" to show that (-).

- i) students today don't have enough career options.
- ii) having many choices can make it hard to make a decision.
- iii) university degrees are becoming too difficult to complete.
- iv) young people are not interested in making their own choices.

(8 points)

4. According to paragraph 4, how has the "burden" of work changed?

Complete the sentence.

In the past, people blamed their parents if they were unhappy at work, but today they

_____.

(9 points)

5. What is the main problem with having "total freedom of choice"? (paragraph 4)

ANSWER: _____

(8 points)

6. What advice do experts give in the last paragraph for dealing with many choices?

- i) We should try to find a job that is absolutely perfect.
- ii) We should go back to following our parents' traditions.
- iii) We should be satisfied with an option that is "good enough."
- iv) We should avoid making any big life decisions.

(8 points)
