

A. Read the text below and respond to tasks A1 and A2.

When I moved to Australia at the age of eight, I learned that the most difficult part of speaking another language was adjusting to live conversation and participating in debates. Unable to ask questions, let alone to raise objections, I began to wear a distant smile and to withdraw into my thoughts. When I told my mum and dad of my frustration, they advised me to be patient and understanding: “Try to imagine things from their perspective”. Nevertheless, the differences between my peers and me seemed to pose a distance too great to bridge.

Things changed for me when I joined my primary school debate team. I had been attracted to the activity by the promise of getting others’ attention. But I also discovered a new way of thinking and expressing myself. The experience left me convinced that debates can help us improve our lives and communities in these challenging times.

Consider the rules of a debate: two sides are randomly assigned to argue for and against a topic. To win a debate, one must understand not only one’s own case but also that of the other side. In the last moments of preparation before a round, the best debaters go through a series of exercises known as side-switch. One such exercise involves taking out a fresh sheet of paper, placing oneself on the opposite side of the topic and brainstorming the four best arguments for this new position. From this switched position, you can consider the possibility that you are wrong.

Any group, whether a family, a workplace or a nation, has to manage its disagreements, but today so many of our arguments are useless and painful. Many times we get stuck and we end up shouting at one another from a distance, fixed in our respective places. Habits of mind such as the side-switch help us become unstuck and force us to consider the other side, not so that we may avoid disagreeing, but so that we may disagree better.

Debates can give us many other lessons, from constructing arguments to deciding when a disagreement is worthwhile. Most importantly, they train us to change other people’s minds with nothing more than words.

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A. ΚΑΤΑΝΟΗΣΗ ΓΡΑΠΤΟΥ ΛΟΓΟΥ

A1. Answer questions 1-3 based on information from the text (max. 30 words each).

1. What would be a suitable title for this text?
2. What is the purpose of the text?
3. According to the text, how can side-switch exercises help us manage a disagreement?

Justify your answer.

A2. Choose the correct answer (A, B, or C) for items 4–9 based on information from the text.

4. Who would be most interested in reading this text?
 A. Lawyers. B. The general public. C. Politicians.
5. When he moved to Australia, the writer found it difficult to
 A. communicate with his peers. B. adapt to the new culture. C. participate in after-school activities.
6. The writer's parents advised him to
 A. wear a confident smile. B. learn the language faster. C. be tolerant to others.
7. By participating in the school debate team, the writer became
 A. more popular. B. more competitive. C. more open-minded.
8. To succeed in a debate, a participant must
 A. consider different viewpoints. B. use complex vocabulary. C. speak clearly and loudly.
9. Debate practice can help us improve our
 A. public speaking skills. B. problem solving skills. C. verbal persuasion skills.

B. ΓΛΩΣΣΙΚΗ ΕΠΙΓΝΩΣΗ

- B1. Use the correct form of the following words (A-H) to complete the gaps (10-14) in the following text, as in the example. There are TWO words you do not need.

A.	strategy	B.	power	C.	happy	D.	<i>stimulate</i> (example)
E.	body	F.	situate	G.	constant	H.	involve

The example is in **bold** and *italics*.

What are the benefits of playing chess?

Chess is a timeless and intellectually (*ex.*) ***stimulating*** game that has captivated players of all ages for centuries. While it may appear as a simple board game, its (10) _____ benefits reach far beyond the chessboard, offering players the opportunity to enhance their cognitive abilities and brain function. When in a game, players must anticipate their opponent's (11) _____ moves and respond accordingly. This level of personal (12) _____ directly stimulates the brain region responsible for concentration. In everyday life, enhanced concentration can help individuals manage stress and maintain a sense of calm, as they can more easily focus on the task at hand and block out unwanted distractions. In a world where our attention is (13) _____ being pulled in different directions, the ability to focus on one task or idea has never been more valuable. At the same time, chess teaches players to be patient in their actions, a skill that translates well into everyday (14) _____ that require thoughtful decision-making.

- B2. Fill in the gaps with TWO words in the statement of column B, so that they are similar in meaning to the statements (15-19) of column A, as in the example.

Example: I have not seen Mary for over six months.

It has been over six months since I **last saw** Mary.

	A. A SPOKEN FORM	B. WRITTEN FORM
15.	It appears that we have no milk left; we need to buy some on our way home tonight.	It appears that we have _____ of milk; we need to buy some on our way home tonight.
16.	I have already said I'm sorry for being late.	I have already _____ being late.
17.	He did not thank us for our help when he left.	He left _____ us for our help.
18.	Could you look after my cat while I'm away on a business trip?	Would you mind _____ of my cat while I'm away on a business trip?
19.	We couldn't get to the city centre because of the bus strike.	The bus strike _____ us _____ getting to the city centre.

- B3. Choose the best option A-F (Column B-headings) for items 20-24 (Column A-paragraphs). There is ONE option you do not need.**

Dr. Jane Goodall's vision and work around the world

COLUMN A		COLUMN B	
20.	In July 1960, at the age of 26, Jane Goodall travelled from England to what is now known as Tanzania to study the remarkable lives of chimpanzees. When she discovered that the survival of their species was threatened, she developed a breakthrough approach to species conservation that improves the lives of people, animals and the environment.	A.	ONLY THE BASICS
21.	Equipped with little more than a notebook, binoculars, and her fascination with wildlife, Jane Goodall managed to give the world a remarkable window into humankind's closest living relatives. With open eyes and an open mind, Dr. Jane Goodall made discoveries that rocked the scientific world, forever changing the way we look at our closest living relatives and ourselves.	B.	CLOSE TO EACH OTHER
22.	From the day she began her legendary chimpanzee research in Gombe, Jane Goodall took an unconventional approach towards her subjects. She immersed herself in their forest habitat with a fresh mind. She explored their complex society as a fellow neighbour rather than a	C.	A GLOBAL MISSION

	remote observer and came to know and interact with them as individuals over many years.		
23.	In 1977, Dr. Jane Goodall founded the Jane Goodall Institute to ensure that her vision will continue to mobilize the collective power of individual action to save the natural world we all share. Today, she travels the world, speaking about the threats chimpanzees are facing, urging each one of us to take action on behalf of all living creatures on our planet.	D.	HEALTHY HABITATS
24.	Over the years, Dr. Jane Goodall’s ground-breaking research has attracted many women, who were nearly absent from her field. She also inspires thousands of young people to take action in their own communities through the Roots & Shoots program that gives young people the confidence to make a difference by being part of something bigger than themselves.	E.	HEADING TO THE UNKNOWN
		F.	SETTING AN EXAMPLE

Γ. ΠΑΡΑΓΩΓΗ ΓΡΑΠΤΟΥ ΛΟΓΟΥ

TASK: A European Youth magazine is asking teenagers to share their memories on the following topic: “My best day at school”. Write an article (180-200 words) to submit to the magazine in which you:

- describe **what happened** on that memorable school day and
- explain **the effect** that day has had on your life.

Provide your own title for your article.

Do not mention your name anywhere in the text.