

## PART 2

*You are going to read a newspaper article about older people playing computer games. Seven sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the paragraphs A-H the one which fits each gap (9-15). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use. Transfer answers to the answer sheet (the form on a separate page).*

### THE GREY GAMERS

One form of social prejudice against older people is the belief that they cannot comprehend or use modern technology. Activities like computer games, surfing the Net and downloading MP3s are a privilege of the youngsters. Isn't it unfair that older people enjoying a computer game should be frowned upon by their children and grandchildren? Besides, the population profile has changed.

**9** In Britain, for instance, there are more people over sixty than there are under sixteen. Nowadays older people have more control over their lives and they play a full part in society.

Moreover, better health care has left more people in their sixties and seventies feeling fit and active after retirement.

**10** Playing computer games is a very effective way of exercising the brain.

When personal computers were first introduced, most older people felt intimidated by information technology and didn't believe they would ever familiarise themselves with it.

**11** Computers have been around for a few generations now and retired people have gradually become more relaxed about using them for recreation. Gamers over 65 prefer playing puzzle games and card games like Mahjong, Solitaire and Gin Rummy. Kate Stevens, aged 72, says: 'I find it very relaxing. It's not very demanding, but you still need to concentrate.'

Another development that has favoured 'grey gamers', as older people who are keen on computer games are known, is

a change in the type of videogames available on the market. **12** Internet Chess and Train Simulator are among the most popular of these. Train Simulator is based on real-world rail activities. Players can choose from a variety of challenges, such as keeping to a strict timetable despite unforeseen obstacles and using helper engines during a winter storm.

**13** This couldn't be further from the truth. Most computer games require the kind of analytical thinking that improves with practice, which means that the 'grey gamers' may well be far better than opponents half a century younger than them.

In games where speed is the main consideration, older people would be at a disadvantage because they may have slower reaction times. **14** Peter Brown, aged 76, says: 'When we visit our grandchildren, we play games on the Internet like chess and Scrabble. If I try to make things easier for them, they realise it and get annoyed. They don't have a problem losing. But when we play their games, they just have to win.'

The type of advertising used by videogame manufacturers suggests that they are still aiming almost exclusively at teenagers. Game industries haven't yet woken up to the fact that a vast potential market exists out there. **15** It's time someone let the manufacturers into the secret.

- A** Because of their greater spending ability, 'grey gamers' are better consumers than teenagers, and targeting them would be comparatively more profitable for the business.
- B** On the other hand, 'grey gamers' have a preference for slower paced, mind challenging games and would not mind being beaten by their grandchildren in a fast action game with space invaders and extraterrestrial creatures.
- C** Mental activity, as well as physical exercise, can contribute to better health.
- D** Some people argue that 'grey gamers' simply don't have the skills required for computer games, and that teenagers are infinitely better.
- E** This is how the myth of the older, computer-illiterate person was created.
- F** In many western countries, life expectancy has increased and there are now far more older people than there were a few generations ago.
- G** There's a greater variety of games to choose from, including more intellectual and sophisticated strategy and simulation games.
- H** Many experts were surprised when this study was published several years ago.