

# 4

## Multitasking: How to do it all?



Level: 1



### Let's think!

1. What is an example of multitasking in class?
2. Why do people like multitasking?

PLAYLIST



READ ALONG



**'I'm good at multitasking. I can do several tasks at the same time,' a 13-year-old told the reporter in a street interview.**

**1** Many teenagers use their smartphones while studying. When they are told that this leads to poor concentration, they argue that the ability to multitask is the key to handling it all.



\_\_\_\_\_ ? 5

**2** Multitasking means juggling multiple tasks at a time so as to get more done at once. So, is multitasking a key to success or just a myth? Much recent research has been devoted to this question.

### Upside

#### Making progress

10

**3** Taking small steps is better than doing nothing. Although you may be working on a number of tasks, you are in fact a step closer to the completion of each task.

### Saving time

**4** Good multitaskers set achievable goals. It saves time as you don't need to combine separate tasks. For instance, you may type minutes during the meeting instead of taking handwritten notes and then typing a final copy later on. 15

### Downside

#### Causing stress and anxiety

**5** Research shows that task-switching overstimulates your brain. This leads to cycles of anxiety and stress. You'll feel you have too much to handle and it can result in catastrophe. It's important to stop multitasking when you are feeling snowed under. 20



#### Ruining creativity and sacrificing quality

**6** Multitasking may get you overwhelmed. Pressure will kill your creativity. When you manage to beat the clock, you may also lower standards, affecting the quality of your work.

?

7 When you multitask, you are actually switching rapidly back and forth between tasks. You make more mistakes, things take longer to get done and stress levels increase. So, what can be done about this?



25



### Don't overload yourself



8 Prioritise your tasks. Draw up a list based on urgency and importance. Remember your limits and that massive burnout will further slow down progress.

30

### Remove distractions

9 Sources of distractions vary from one another. Some can't focus without music. Others may get distracted by it. When you figure out the root of the problem, your productivity will increase.

35

### Comments:



Emily 21 Sept 20XX 21:52

Oh, please. I can't choose efficiency over imagination.



Jack 21 Sept 20XX 19:30

When you broadcast live, you have to hold the microphone, take notes and look professional. It's nearly impossible to tackle just one single task each time. 😞

40



George 20 Sept 20XX 13:15

It's not for me to say—I always stay focused even during long shifts at the hospital.



Alice 20 Sept 20XX 15:45

I often leave my reading assignments to the last minute. Multitasking works for me. 👍

45

~400 words

### Looking into Grammar

We usually use imperatives to give orders and advice. To form imperatives, we use the base form of the verbs. Negative imperatives start with **Do not** ....

✓ **Do not** / **Don't** overload (✗ **overloading**) yourself.

✓ **Prioritise** (✗ **Prioritises**) your tasks.

? Underline TWO more imperative sentences in paragraph 8.

Read the text and answer questions 1–14. For multiple-choice questions, choose the best answer and blacken ONE circle only. (27 marks)

1. Which of the following picture best illustrates how the 13-year-old teenager (line 1) sees ‘multitasking’?



- A      B      C      D

2. What is the benefit of multitasking according to the teenagers in paragraph 1?  
 If you can multitask, \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Which of the following could be the best section heading for lines 6–8?

- A. What is multitasking?  
 B. Is multitasking scientifically proven?  
 C. Is multitasking effective?  
 D. What are the benefits of multitasking?

- A      B      C      D

4. Find a word in paragraph 5 which shows the writer’s view that things may not end up well if you multitask too much. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Name THREE negative impacts brought by multitasking using the information in lines 17–24.

- (i) \_\_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (iii) \_\_\_\_\_

6. Look for phrases in paragraphs 5–6 to match the following definitions.

- (i) \_\_\_\_\_ (idiom) having problems dealing with a lot of work  
 (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ (idiom) to finish a task before a time limit

7. According to paragraphs 3–6, the writer intends to \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. define the meaning of multitasking  
 B. show the ups and downs of being a teenager  
 C. analyse the pros and cons of multitasking  
 D. emphasise the negative effects brought by multitasking

- A      B      C      D

8. What is ONE word that can be a section heading for lines 26–35? \_\_\_\_\_

9. In each line, there is a mistake. Underline the mistake and replace the word with ONE word from lines 22–28 that expresses the correct idea. Write the word in the space on the right. The first one has been done for you.

e.g. When there is a time limit, your creativity may be <u>boosted</u> .	<u>limited</u>
(i) Your work quality is increased, as you try to work quickly.	_____
(ii) You also become more relaxed when you multitask.	_____


10. Complete the list by filling in each blank with ONE word taken from paragraphs 8–9.

How to become a smart multitasker
• Prioritise your tasks and make a (i) _____.
• Know your limits to avoid (ii) _____.
• Get rid of (iii) _____ to increase (iv) _____.

11. What is ‘the root of the problem’ mentioned in paragraph 9?

\_\_\_\_\_

**11** ‘The root of the problem’ means the cause of the problem.

-  12. Which of the following is the best title for the article?

- A. Multitasking: Boosting productivity or hindering performance?
- B. Multitasking: The origin of stress and anxiety
- C. Multitasking: Master it in a clever way
- D. Multitasking: A race against time

**12** Which option best concludes all the section headings?

- A      B      C      D

13. What is the most likely opinion of each person towards the statement ‘Multitasking is ineffective.’?

	Agrees	Disagrees	Neutral
(i) Emily	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(ii) Jack	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(iii) George	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(iv) Alice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. What are the possible occupations of these netizens? Write the correct letters in the boxes.

Netizens		Occupations	
(i) Emily	<input type="text"/>	A. a student	B. a doctor
(ii) Jack	<input type="text"/>	C. a writer	D. a TV journalist
(iii) George	<input type="text"/>		
(iv) Alice	<input type="text"/>		

# Vocabulary

GLOSSARY



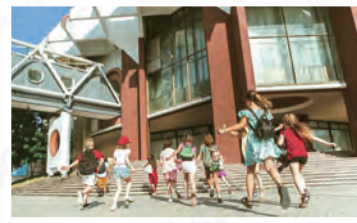
A. Complete the email below with the given words. Make sure your answers are grammatically correct.

**Adjective:** achievable

**Noun:** burnout      distraction      efficiency      imagination      progress

**Verb:** juggle      overwhelm      prioritise      sacrifice

To: amy.chan@email.com  
 From: kelly.wong@email.com  
 Subject: An update of my school life in London



Dear Amy,

How are you? It has been two months since I started boarding school in London. I am getting used to the new environment, but I still miss going to school with you!

The learning atmosphere here is totally different from that of Hong Kong. In Hong Kong, we are constantly (1) \_\_\_\_\_ by schoolwork, and we have to take part in various extracurricular activities after school. As a result, we have to (2) \_\_\_\_\_ our time between homework and extracurricular activities. This often leads to (3) \_\_\_\_\_ by the end of the week because we are just too tired to do anything.

Here at my new school, we don't have much homework. I finally don't need to (4) \_\_\_\_\_ sleep for it. The school (5) \_\_\_\_\_ students' mental and physical well-being over their test scores. I now have more time for my favourite hobby—painting! My new friends like my paintings a lot and say I have a great (6) \_\_\_\_\_.

I'm now determined to make good (7) \_\_\_\_\_ in learning English. I read before going to bed every night. To improve my (8) \_\_\_\_\_ and to stay focused when I read, I put away my biggest (9) \_\_\_\_\_—my mobile phone. This goal is definitely (10) \_\_\_\_\_, and I hope to share some good news with you in the future.

How is your school life in Hong Kong? Write back soon.

Best wishes,  
 Kelly



B. Look at the pictures. Write the correct phrases in the spaces provided.

### Dealing with multiple tasks

avoid distractions

cooperate with others

create a 'to-do' list

make use of technology

prioritise tasks

pursue goals

set time limits

take breaks



## Writing

Is it good or bad to work on several tasks at a time?

Write an article about the pros and cons of multitasking in about 150 words.