

PART 1: Based on the text below, choose the correct option for each question. Only one item is correct.

The End of Books? The Future of Reading in the Age of AI Magic

(P1) Napoleon is supposed to have said, “Show me a family of readers, and I will show you the people who move the world”. People tend to unconsciously recognize how powerful the activity called reading is. For almost 600 years now, the printed book, and its spiritual successor the e-book have been the chief helper in **kindling** and sustaining the fire of enlightenment throughout the world. Many great scholars and erudites have shared their love and pride towards their personal libraries.

(P2) Unsurprisingly, given the established power of written works, a large number of people have always been concerned about benefiting properly from reading. On any given day on the web, we see a good amount of online activity around people trying to get better at things. People go to various online avenues, and ask - how do I get better at reading? How do I make it a habit? How do I read more? How do I remember better? What should I read? And so on. Maybe you too have asked such questions once, or maybe you are asking such questions today (like me).

(P3) Either way, it is circa 2023, and **we** are living through a special period in human history, the time when **we** are privileged to see the first flickers of AGI_(Artificial General Intelligence) in action. It is an amazing time to be alive, and **we** are lucky to witness the emergence of such magic in the world. At the same time, **we** are forced to ask some hard questions about what’s in store as to the future of reading, in the age of AI magic. Is it the beginning of the end, of the great tradition of written works? Are all the questions **we** are asking about reading now irrelevant? Are **we** asking the wrong questions?

(P4) Humans became serious in terms of writing only 3000 years ago when we figured that the sounds of spoken words could be represented through symbols and formalized for efficient transfer of meaning. The printing press was invented merely 600 years ago by Gutenberg. It was a revolution in the distribution of knowledge, enabling a large swath of humans to acquire advanced perspectives efficiently.

(P5) As to the question of the future of reading books, given the rate of change, and improvements, we definitely must expect rapid changes in the way knowledge is created, distributed, and used. Since we know that books have had a solid **run** of about 600 years, we may give them at most about 100 years to completely become antique pieces to be preserved, but we must definitely expect their importance to go down over time, even in the medium term. It may well happen that the book as a mainstream knowledge acquisition method will end up practically dead within 25-30 years.

(P6) The most rigid part opposing change is the habits of the older people, decades of knowledge acquisition methods, and deeply entrenched teaching methods in the schools and colleges. We are awaiting an influx of pain and confusion as the old world must adapt to make way for the new world. However, I suspect the younger people will have no qualms about skipping reading cover to cover and simply getting their information through AI. Moreover, whether we like it or not, books are going away in the long term. The way I see it, the core value proposition of books is that they aid with the survival and thriving of civilization. In one potential configuration of the future, AIs could act as translators of ideas from one mind to another.

Adapted from: <https://journal.hexmos.com/books-future/>, accessed on 17/11/2024.

1. Paragraph 01 (P1) answers which of the following?

- A) Napoleon believed that readers were primarily responsible for the advancement of world politics and power.
- B) Scholars are generally uninterested in their personal libraries and do not value them as a source of pride.
- C) The passage suggests that reading is a modern invention that emerged in the last few decades.
- D) Reading, whether through printed books or e-books, has been a central force in spreading enlightenment over the last six centuries.

2. The word **kindling**, in paragraph 01 (P1), is closest in meaning to
A) extinguishing B) stimulating C) clarifying D) hiding
3. In paragraph 01 (P1), the author suggests
A) Napoleon believed that reading was an activity for the privileged, and only a select few had access to books throughout history.
B) People are generally unaware of the power of reading, and books have only recently become important for intellectual development.
C) The printed book and e-books have played a central role in fostering enlightenment and knowledge worldwide for nearly 600 years.
D) Napoleon's quote is a metaphorical reference to the importance of reading but does not highlight the role of books in spreading knowledge.
4. Why is the following information included in paragraph 02 (P2): **On any given day on the web, we see a good amount of online activity around people trying to get better at things.**
A) To emphasize that the internet is a popular source for people to seek help with their reading habits.
B) To suggest that most people are interested in learning how to read faster.
C) To highlight the general trend of people searching for self-improvement in various aspects of life.
D) To assert that online platforms are the only place people go to improve their skills.
5. Which of the sentences below best expresses the essential information in "Unsurprisingly, given the established power of written works, a large number of people have always been concerned about benefiting properly from reading." highlighted in paragraph 02 (P2)?
A) People frequently question how to improve their reading habits, particularly in terms of retention and the selection of reading material.
B) Many people are naturally concerned about the advantages of reading and often look for ways to enhance their reading skills.
C) The increasing use of the internet has made people more focused on developing their reading abilities, leading to countless online discussions.
D) The idea that written works hold power has led to a rise in online platforms dedicated to helping readers become more efficient.
6. The word **we**, in paragraph 03 (P3), refers to
A) the general public, who are witnessing the rise of Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) and reflecting on its implications.
B) the scientific community, particularly researchers in the field of AI, who are developing AGI.
C) a specific group of experts in reading and literacy, who are concerned about the future of written works.
D) a historical group of individuals from the past, observing the development of technology in the present day.
7. According to paragraph 04 (P4), which of the following is true?
A) Humans began to use writing systematically only after the invention of the printing press by Gutenberg.
B) The ability to represent spoken words through symbols was invented around 600 years ago, following the printing press.
C) Writing was invented only 600 years ago, after the development of the printing press.
D) The printing press, invented 600 years ago, significantly altered the distribution of knowledge, making it more accessible to people.
8. Paragraph 05 (P5) answers which of the following?
A) Books will likely remain the primary method of acquiring knowledge for at least another 100 years, as they have had a strong influence for the past six centuries.
B) Although books have been an essential part of knowledge dissemination for 600 years, their importance is expected to decline significantly in the next few decades.
C) The decline in the use of books is expected to occur over the next 25-30 years, but their role as a mainstream knowledge acquisition method will persist for at least another century.
D) Given the current pace of technological advancements, books will likely remain relevant for another 600 years, with their role expanding rather than diminishing.
9. The word "run", in paragraph 05 (P5), is closest in meaning to
A) duration B) movement C) space D) method

10. According to paragraph 05 (P5), which of the following is true?

- A) Books will likely remain the primary method of acquiring knowledge for the next 100 years.
- B) The future of books is uncertain, but they are expected to continue being a significant means of learning for at least another 50 years.
- C) Books are predicted to lose importance over the next 25-30 years, possibly becoming obsolete in that period.
- D) The rate of change in knowledge distribution will not affect the use of books in the foreseeable future.

PART 2: Mark each of statements below as true (T) or false (F) according to the text.

- 1. () The most rigid opposition to change comes from the habits of younger people and their modern methods of acquiring knowledge.
- 2. () The writer predicts that the old world will face pain and confusion as it adapts to make way for the new world.
- 3. () According to the text, books will continue to play a central role in civilization's survival and thriving in the long term.
- 4. () The younger generation will likely prefer reading books from cover to cover rather than using AI to gather information.
- 5. () AIs may eventually serve as tools for translating ideas between different minds, according to one potential future scenario.
- 6. () The writer suggests that older people have no resistance to change in how knowledge is acquired and transmitted.
- 7. () The text implies that the role of books in civilization's future is uncertain and will likely diminish over time.
- 8. () The younger generation is expected to fully embrace traditional reading methods rather than relying on AI for information.

Answer Key

PART 1

1. D
2. B
3. C
4. C
5. B
6. A
7. D
8. B
9. A
10. C

PART 2

1. (F)
2. (T)
3. (F)
4. (F)
5. (T)
6. (F)
7. (T)
8. (F)