Monday 20 May 2013 – Morning

AS GCE CRITICAL THINKING

F501/01/RB Introduction to Critical Thinking

RESOURCE BOOKLET

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

To be issued with the Question Paper
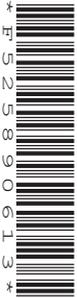
INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

* Read all the documents before starting to answer the questions.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

* The information contained in this Resource Booklet was accurate when it went to press, but may subsequently have changed. Questions should be answered on the basis that the information is correct.
* This document consists of **4** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

INSTRUCTION TO EXAMS OFFICER / INVIGILATOR

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Turn over

> **Background information**
> Public libraries
> - are funded by local councils from local taxes
> - can provide a range of services as well as lending books, such as (free) internet access, audio books, rooms for events and advisory services
> - can vary in size from a room at the back of a village hall to a separate building on several floors.
>
> Not all towns and villages have public libraries, so some people could have to travel quite a long way to their nearest public library.

Document 1

A quiet rebellion against library closures

In recent years more than 450 public libraries have faced closure because of the spending cuts. In a recession, libraries may seem a low priority, but we should still fight a quiet rebellion to keep them and their services going. They are a sign that a society believes that the mind is important and above all, they are also places where we can immerse ourselves in ideas or imagine other lives and worlds.

1

There are many arguments for their closure, but few stand up to examination. Politicians declare that libraries are the preserve of the middle classes. However, a poll on Twitter suggested otherwise. The tweeters included someone who had been homeless (who used to spend days in the library using its free internet to work out how to get out of their situation); those who had been picked on at school (who told how they had used libraries as a refuge from aggression); and newcomers (who said they always joined the library when they arrived in a new town, because it is the perfect place to get a sense of the community). Surely a part of Britain's community network will be lost if there are mass library closures.

2

The claim frequently made by technologists that "We don't need libraries now, as we have the internet, electronic books and phone apps", misses the point because books are an adventure. There is a joy in flicking through books in the hope that you will find the answers you need.

3

The claim of town and city councils, wanting to protect their budgets, that "Youngsters don't use libraries any more", is just wrong. Although library attendance figures aren't improving, they are remaining static for children aged 11 to 15, with about 70% being regular library users. Libraries are packed with under-tens. For many, the first experience of the wonder of reading is browsing through the boxes of books or being thrilled by a librarian reading stories by Roald Dahl or Jacqueline Wilson.

4

Document 2

Yes to closures or radical change

A **blogger** pointed out: "The statistics speak for themselves. Library use from 2005–2010, as measured by the proportion of the population using a library at least once a year, has declined every single year, to 39.4%. Of that, only about half, or 18.2% of the population, uses a library at least once a month. Most use them less – and probably wouldn't miss them if they closed. And surely the weekly story session for children could be held elsewhere more cheaply, such as in a classroom."

A **children's author** argued: "Libraries must change in the same way that museums have, since local libraries are still stuck in old-fashioned, often unwelcoming buildings. I've visited fantastic new museum galleries in Sheffield, Edinburgh, Manchester and Leeds that were packed full of excited children busily downloading information using interactive digital displays. I was delighted when I discovered that kids would be able to download my next book on their mobile phones. Are we certain that technology has nothing positive to add to children's literacy?"

Document 3

Library supporters have their say

• The **Director of the National Literacy Trust** pointed out: "We campaign to improve public understanding of the vital importance of literacy and our research shows just how important a role libraries play in supporting literacy." The National Literacy Trust report, based on a survey of more than 17 000 young people aged eight to 16 years, revealed that almost two-thirds (64.5%) of those who use the library are reading above the expected level for their age. For non-library users, this figure is just 35.5%.

• A **retired builder** who pops over the road to his local library about three times a week claimed that this saves him quite a bit of money: "I can dip into a book and if it isn't really my kind of book, I can return it and haven't wasted eight or nine quid."

• A qualified **librarian** who works in a public library said: "Libraries are not just a luxury, they are absolutely crucial for community cohesion and they are vital for life-long learning. In isolated places where elderly people have lost partners, the librarian may be the only person they speak to that day and they really enjoy that dialogue and conversation."

• A **bookshop manager** pointed out: "No digital option will wholly replace kids' books, as kids need to chew them and throw them about." He added that "libraries often introduce kids to the experience of physically choosing a book and the pleasure of exploring its pages."

Document 4

Taking Part – statistics on library visitors

The percentage of the population using a library at least once a year

■ Adults (16+)

▨ Children (11–15)
(no figures are available for 2005/06)

▧ Children (5–10)
(no figures are available prior to 2008/09)
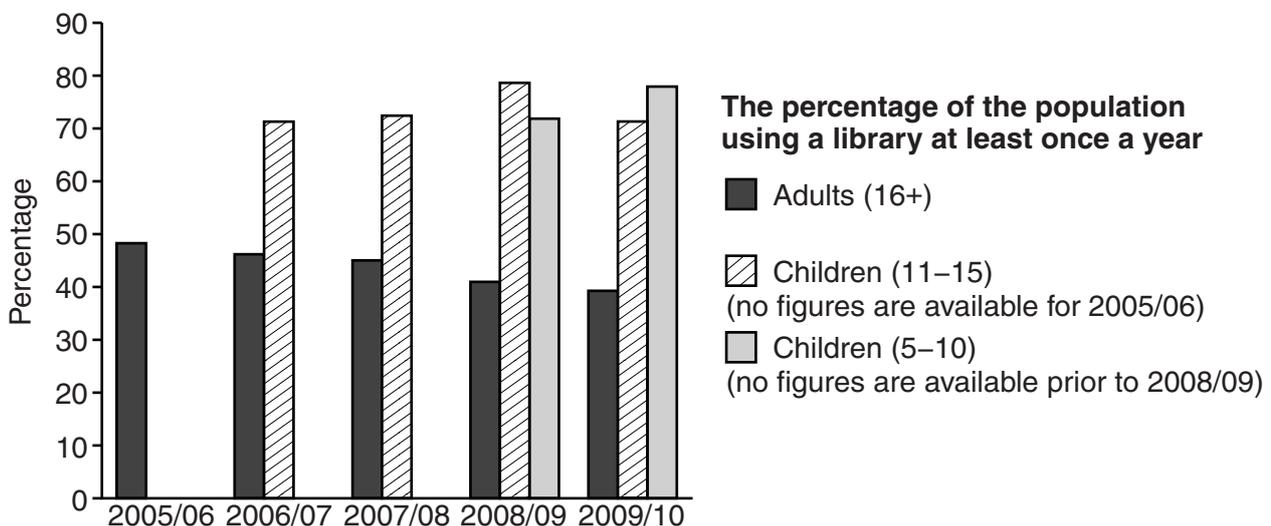
Department for Culture, Media and Sport:
Our aim is to:
    • *improve the quality of life for all through cultural and sporting activities*
    • *support the pursuit of excellence*
    • *champion the tourism, creative and leisure industries.*
'Taking Part' is a National Statistic produced by our Department to the standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics