

I. READING COMPREHENSION (12 marks)

Stan Burridge, 44, who lived on benefits for 15 years, tells how getting a job a year ago was worth much more than just money.

1. "I came through the care system as a kid, lived rough on the streets for five years and had issues including one major mental breakdown. When I came off the streets it was far easier to stay on benefits and do nothing. It almost became a dependency. I have spent about 15 years claiming benefits and there seemed to be a fear factor attached to letting **that** go and stepping in the big unknown.
2. I kept turning down jobs because my life meant I had never stuck at anything. What if the job didn't work out ? **That** would leave me with nothing. It was easier to stay on handouts.
3. Getting a job in a call centre has done a lot more for me than just giving me more money. I can now plan for the future. Since starting work I have a new carpet for my flat. I went on a holiday to Egypt – my first real holiday – paid for out of what I had earned. For the first time this Christmas I can afford some nice things for myself.
4. All these things were alien to me before. I had never taken so much control of my life. Now I'm proud to pay my own rent and cover all my bills and enjoy a decent social life. In some ways I was lucky there were people around me who gave me a little push in the right direction. Others may need the incentives the government will give them.
5. Getting up to work got me into a healthy routine. Mine is not the best-paid job, but it's not the worst-and it's one hundred times better than being on benefits. I still get a small amount from the government, but it's £100 a week less than the government would be paying me on full benefits.
6. Having the self-esteem and personal satisfaction of having a job ? Absolutely priceless !"

The Sun, Nov. 13, 2010 (Adapted)

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Tick (✓) the most suitable title to the text (1 mark)
 - a) Staying on benefits helped save my life
 - b) Getting off benefits gave me my life back
 - c) Living on the streets made me turn into a criminal
2. Focus on the first part of the text and pick out two (2) details showing that Stan's life as a child was extremely hard. (2 marks)
 - a)
 - b)
3. Answer the following question.
 For 15 years, Stan refused to have a steady job. What was he afraid of ? (1 mark)

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4. Tick (✓) the right alternative. (2 marks)
 - a) "Priceless" (paragraph 6) means almost the same as:
 - i. worthless
 - ii. valuable
 - iii. free
 - b) "... who gave me a little push in the right direction" (paragraph 4) means they
 - i. helped and encouraged me
 - ii. threatened and bullied me
 - iii. obliged me to follow them
5. Getting a job gave Stan both financial and psychological gains in addition to a decent life.

Complete the lists below with reference to the text. (4 marks)

Financial gains	Psychological gains
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new carpet • Nice things for Christmas • Cover all his bills • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take control of his life • Pride • Healthy routine • Personal satisfaction • •

6. Say what the words underlined in the text refer to. (2 marks)
 - a) "that" (paragraph 1) refers to
 - b) "That" (paragraph 2) refers to

III. LANGUAGE (6 marks)

1. Fill in the blanks with 6 words from the list below. (3 marks)

sharply - inspire - pulled - quitting - declined - pressure - struggle - oblige
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Smoking is addictive but quitting may be contagious, according to a research that suggests social networks shape people's behaviour far more powerfully than previously suspected.

Although many smokers see their battle with nicotine as an individual (1), the study shows that people actually give up smoking in groups, (2) at the same time as others in their social network. Researchers found that someone who stops smoking may (3) not just his friends but distant members of his 'social niche' – a friend of a friend of a friend – whom he doesn't even know. Those who quit appear to have done so under (4) from others in their group.

The number of smokers in the study fell (5)from 1971 to 2003, mirroring national trends. In the past 40 years, the smoking rate has (6)from 45% to 21%. Peer pressure also appears to have pushed people to quit years before the creation of anti-smoking laws.

2. Put the bracketed words in the right tense or form. (3 marks)

A teacher, a lawyer, a judge and now back to being a student – 100-year-old Bholaram Das (**just/enrol**) for his doctorate, perhaps becoming India's (**old**) university student.

Das has got admission in a PhD programme at the Gauhati University in Assam – an announcement he made at a public function organized by his family and friends, (**mark**) his 100th birthday. "There is no age limit for (**acquire**) knowledge," Das said with a smile, dressed nattily in a brown suit and tie.

Das (**jail**) when he was just 19 during the freedom movement against British rule. He had spent two months in prison before he graduated in the commerce stream and later went to study law. "It is indeed heartening to find people like Das in today's world and I am of the firm (**believe**) that he should stand out as a role model for the generation next," Governor J. B. Patnaik told IANS.