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**NOTE: Choose option A or B, and answer the questions from 1 to 4. For question 5, you can choose to write the composition that you like best, from either option A or option B.**

**OPTION A**

**MEET THE MASTER CARVER WHO TURNS PUMPKINS INTO PORTRAITS**

Carving a basic jack-o-lantern in 45 minutes? Sure, no problem, unless you're talking about a portrait of Lady Gaga, Beyoncé or someone's pet poodle. Now that's no easy feat, unless you're Brent Pumpkins, master pumpkin carver extraordinaire who carves celebrities' mugs as well as faces on the spot at New York's High Line Hotel.

5 **NEWSWEEK: Why pumpkins? And how did you get started?**

**BRENT PUMPKINS:** Well, it did start out as a hobby. I grew up in Ohio and I am a musical theatre performer first. And I was traveling with *Chicago*, the musical. We had about a six-week layoff before our next gig and it was during the Halloween season, so I'm kind of crazy and I had a lot of creative energy to burn. I started with Elsa from *Frozen*. I rounded it out doing more *Frozen* characters, because, this being five years ago, I knew people like them. And the movie was popular still.

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I kept posting my work and it was something to keep me motivated and interested in creativity during my layoff and I got kind of obsessed. But a real basic version of Elsa, the moms and aunts and grandmas kind of came out of the woodwork saying like, "Do you think I could get one of these from my daughter or my niece?" And friend, Brent Pumpkins was awakened. And by the end of that first season, I was carving Lady Gaga as the Countess from Horror Story.

15


I did realize I had a knack for it. The first season I was on the local news in Cleveland. So it was kind of like, "There's something here." People love pumpkins. And it is such a niche form of art once a year that I can still do my career as well. (Fragment adapted from *NEWSWEEK*).

**1) BRIEFLY ANSWER ONLY 4 OUT OF THE FOLLOWING 6 QUESTIONS WITH ONLY THE DATA REQUIRED (NOT A WHOLE SENTENCE) (2 POINTS; 0.5 POINTS EACH).**

1. In the phrase *Now that's no easy feat* (line 2), the word 'that' refers to ...
2. In the phrase *who carves celebrities' mugs* (line 3), the word 'who' refers to ...
3. In the phrase *We had about a six-week layoff* (line 7), the word 'We' refers to...
4. How long does it take to carve a pumpkin?
5. How did B. Pumpkins become a carver?
6. Did Brent Pumpkins go to Chicago to attend a performance?

**2) ARE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS TRUE OR FALSE? INDICATE THE LINES THAT SUPPORT YOUR ANSWER (1 POINT).**

1. Brent Pumpkins wasn't raised in Ohio.
2. Brent Pumpkins began carving during the Halloween season.

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**3) CHOOSE a OR b, ONLY ONE CHOICE IS CORRECT ACCORDING TO THE TEXT (1 POINT).**

- a) Brent Pumpkins started carving pumpkins with *Frozen* characters.
- b) Brent Pumpkins is not a musical theatre performer.

**4) VOCABULARY (2 POINTS).**

**4.1 Choose one of the options below and find one word in the text for its definition (0.6 POINTS):**

- a) A dog with curly hair that is usually cut short, except on its head, tail, and legs
- b) Frequently encountered or widely accepted

**4.2 Find a synonym in the text for one of the two words below (0.6 POINTS):**


- a) pastime
- b) stamina

**4.3 For one of the following words from the text, give a synonym that fits the meaning of the text (0.8 POINTS):**

- a) obsessed (line 12)
- b) knack (line 16)

**5) WRITE ABOUT THE FOLLOWING TOPIC USING BETWEEN 120-150 WORDS (4 POINTS).**

Which special abilities would you like to have and why?

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**NOTE: Choose option A or B, and answer the questions from 1 to 4. For question 5, you can choose to write the composition that you like best, from either option A or option B.**

**OPTION B**

**A DECADE OF FITNESS**

For the past 10 years, I have been covering exercise science and I have seen interest in high-intensity exercise soar and enthusiasm for barefoot running fizzle. We have learned contracting muscles talk to baby neurons, creativity blooms from walking, a minute of exertion can be ample, aging is elastic and a chubby dog may be our best exercise motivator.

5 This has been a decade of greatest HIITs, with multiple studies and columns reiterating that super-short, strenuous workouts — known as high-intensity interval training — improve fitness and health to about the same extent as much longer, more moderate exercise. Since 2010, I have covered seven-minute, four-minute, one-minute, 20-second and 10-second interval routines, with each workout’s declining length increasing its attraction.

10 Other studies highlighted that gentle exercise is also meaningful. In one of my favorite studies, researchers found that older women who regularly strolled about two miles a day lived longer than women who covered only a mile.


15 Their brains also tended to look and work differently. In what may be the most inspiring area of fitness research from the past decade, scientists have found the extent to which movement may remake how we think and feel. In one study after another, physical activity beneficially remodeled the brains of children and the middle-aged; lowered people’s risks for dementia or, if dementia had already begun, slowed memory loss; and increased brain volume, tissue health and the quality of connections between neurons and different portions of the brain.

20 Exercise also seems able to encourage moods far more than most of us might have expected 10 years ago. Physically active people proved to be less likely to develop depression than sedentary people, no matter what types of activities they chose.

25 Walking, jogging, gardening, weight training, swimming, hiking or even rising from an office or living room chair often and strolling across the room seemed to make people happier and less prone to mood problems than remaining still. I hope that scientists might eventually help us to better understand why, with everything we know about the benefits of exercise, so few of us manage to get up and work out regularly. (Adapted from *The New York Times*).

**1) BRIEFLY ANSWER ONLY 4 OUT OF THE FOLLOWING 6 QUESTIONS WITH ONLY THE DATA REQUIRED (NOT A WHOLE SENTENCE) (2 POINTS; 0.5 POINTS EACH).**

1. Who does ‘their’ refer to in *Their brains also tended...* (line 13)?
2. What does HIIT stand for?
3. What affects the way we think and feel?
4. Who’s less likely to develop depression?
5. Name three types of exercise that do not deal with distance.
6. Who will help us understand why so few of us do exercise regularly?

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**2) ARE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS TRUE OR FALSE? INDICATE THE LINES THAT SUPPORT YOUR ANSWER (1 POINT).**

1. Since 2010, the author has covered only seven-minute interval routines.
2. Older women who walked about two miles a day lived longer than women who covered a smaller distance.

**3) CHOOSE a OR b, ONLY ONE CHOICE IS CORRECT ACCORDING TO THE TEXT (1 POINT).**

- a) The author has noted that people are more interested in high-intensity exercise than in barefoot running.
- b) Studies have shown that contracting muscles talk to baby neurons but creativity does not bloom from walking.

**4) VOCABULARY (2 POINTS).**

**4.1 Choose one of the options below and find one word in the text for its definition (0.6 POINTS):**

- a) A particular subject that is studied using scientific methods.
- b) People whose job involve discovering or verifying information for use in books, programs, etc.

**4.2 Find a synonym in the text for one of the two words below (0.6 POINTS):**

- a) fat
- b) walked

**4.3 For one of the following words from the text, give a synonym that fits the meaning of the text (0.8 POINTS):**

- a) multiple (line 5)
- b) portions (line 18)

**5) WRITE ABOUT THE FOLLOWING TOPIC USING BETWEEN 120-150 WORDS (4 POINTS).**

How do you think doing exercise or practicing sports may improve your life?



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