

Županijsko natjecanje iz engleskoga jezika – ispit slušanja

You will hear the recording about social media challenges.

You will have time to look through the sentences before you listen. Write your answers on the test first but don't forget to copy your answers onto the answer sheet when you finish. The recording will be played twice, and there will be a short pause between the two listenings. You can write your answers during both the first and the second listening.

For each statement, 1 to 10, decide whether they are true or false. Write T for true, or F for false. There is an example at the beginning (0). Copy your answers onto the Answer Sheet.

You now have 30 seconds to go through the statements.

Now you will hear the recording.

What would happen if you took a can of aerosol hairspray or air freshener and sprayed it directly at a cigarette lighter's flame? Any rational adult is likely to say, Nothing good. But if you're a teen, you might think, Great snap! Since mid-March, social media have been flooded with videos of young people creating blowtorch-size dragon-breath puffs of fire by putting flame into contact with flammable liquid (usually while indoors). It began when one teen Instagram user gave the stunt a try and tagged the video post #FireSprayChallenge. The online dare spread rapidly, and now there are over 4,000 posts on Instagram with the #FireSprayChallenge hashtag.

The daring feat is an offshoot of the #FireChallenge, another popular and even more dangerous social media craze that involves splashing oneself with a flammable liquid like rubbing alcohol, then lighting your torso or limbs on fire before jumping into a shower or pool. That challenge has resulted in a seemingly endless stream of reports of teens with third- or fourth-degree burns. Last year, an 11-year-old boy in the U.K. underwent a skin transplant after the challenge went terribly wrong. A 15-year-old in Buffalo, New York, died from injuries he suffered after taking the dare. Fire safety divisions in several states have issued emergency warnings about the challenge.

Other popular and life-threatening social media challenges have prompted warnings from public health officials. The #CinnamonChallenge, which involves swallowing a tablespoon of the spice without any water, can lead to vomiting, choking and a trip to the ER. That dare became so popular that within the first three months of 2012, poison centers nationwide received 139 calls that involved cinnamon overdoses.

A person who accepts the #EraserChallenge is required to take a pink eraser and rub it on his or her arm while saying a word for each letter of the alphabet. By the end, some have burns or deep cuts. The list of the many challenges teens take on from social media reads like a disturbing report from a torture chamber: have a friend splash you with boiling water, eat a Carolina Reaper (the world's hottest chili pepper), pour a bottle of vodka into your open eye, or chew and swallow an entire cactus plant.

Attempting to understand the motives behind the reckless stupidity of teenagers has been a frustrating attempt for parents since the beginning of time, and many experts believe the internet has made it even worse. In the good old days, parents typically felt they could maintain control over their misbehaving teen simply by limiting the time spent with peers who were a “bad influence.” But thanks to social media, persuasive people with dumb ideas are now everywhere and a mere click, tap or swipe away. Add in the appeal of 30 seconds of fame, and some teens are willing to try just about anything. In many cases, the more dangerous it is, the better.

Over the years, scientists have tried to better understand the biology behind risk-taking behavior in teens by studying young animals. Early experiments on rodents and nonhuman primates helped pinpoint critical neurochemical and cellular changes in the brain as it matures that may promote novelty- and sensation-seeking behaviors. Then, in the 1980s, magnetic resonance imaging became widely available. Because MRIs are safe to use (they don’t expose a person to radiation), researchers were able to use them to scan the brains of healthy kids repeatedly, over a long period of time. Though the resulting data didn’t confirm what parents often claim—that their teen has half a brain—it did show that critical neurological development does occur during teen years.

The teen brain is forced to seek out new experiences that help the brain learn, but teens don’t yet have the tools to make rational choices. That’s why accidents, drug use, unprotected sex and other risky behaviors are much more common in young people, some experts say. According to the National Institutes of Health, accidental deaths increase dramatically during early and late adolescence. Death by injury occurs at rates six times higher among teens 15 to 19, compared with those 10 to 14.