Free time: relaxation and leisure

VOCABULARY PRACTICE
UPPER-INTERMEDIATE | B2

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 Match each precise term with its definition.

1 leisure pursuit ____	**a** a temporary period of rest or relief from something demanding
2 respite ____	**b** done for pleasure, rather than as a duty
3 self-indulgent ____	**c** helping to restore energy or health
4 recreational ____	**d** not physically active; sitting for long periods
5 restorative ____	**e** dull, repetitive and tiring
6 idle ____	**f** a hobby or activity done regularly for enjoyment
7 escapism ____	**g** giving fresh energy and enthusiasm
8 sedentary ____	**h** allowing oneself pleasure without much restraint
9 invigorating ____	**i** not doing anything productive
10 monotonous ____	**j** the tendency to seek distraction from unpleasant reality

2 Choose the word with the most suitable connotation.

1 For a well-earned break from stress: respite / punishment.
2 For an activity that restores energy: restorative / draining.
3 For escaping reality through entertainment: escapism / confrontation.
4 For a lifestyle involving little movement: sedentary / active.
5 For an energising, refreshing activity: invigorating / tedious.
6 For a dull, repetitive routine: monotonous / varied.
7 For enjoying pleasure without restraint: self-indulgent / disciplined.
8 For time spent doing nothing productive: idle / industrious.

3 Complete the leisure collocations with one word.

1 a well-earned _____ (= a deserved break)
2 _____ pursuits (= hobbies done for enjoyment)
3 a form of _____ (= a way of escaping reality)
4 a _____ lifestyle (= one with little physical activity)

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5 an _____ walk (= one that energises you)

6 a _____ routine (= a dull, repetitive one)

7 _____ activity (= done for pleasure, not duty)

8 time to _____ (= to rest and do nothing)

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4 Complete the case notes with words and phrases from the box.

escapism | idle | invigorating | leisure pursuits | monotonous | recreational | respite | restorative | sedentary | self-indulgent

Case A: After weeks of a demanding schedule, she finally found some 1 _____ over the long weekend, describing it as genuinely 2 _____.
Case B: He admitted his job had become 3 _____, and that his mostly 4 _____ lifestyle was starting to affect his energy levels.
Case C: Some critics dismissed the new streaming series as pure 5 _____, though fans argued that occasional 6 _____ entertainment does no harm.
Case D: Rather than feeling guilty about a few 7 _____ hours on a Sunday, she began treating them as 8 _____, part of her wider set of 9 _____, alongside more active pastimes.
Case E: A brisk morning walk proved surprisingly 10 _____, setting a positive tone for the day.

5 Read the text and answer the questions briefly.

Rethinking leisure

Contemporary attitudes to leisure are shifting, as more people question the assumption that free time must be either productive or purely restorative to count as well spent. Some psychologists argue that genuinely enjoyable leisure pursuits, even self-indulgent or seemingly unproductive ones, contribute meaningfully to wellbeing, provided they are chosen freely rather than out of habit or avoidance. A sedentary evening of escapism, for instance, may be entirely restorative if it follows a demanding day, whereas the same activity pursued out of chronic avoidance may instead deepen fatigue. The distinction, researchers suggest, lies less in the activity itself than in the intention behind it.

1 What assumption are people increasingly questioning? _____
2 What do some psychologists argue about self-indulgent leisure? _____
3 Under what condition does leisure contribute meaningfully to wellbeing? _____
4 When might a sedentary evening of escapism be entirely restorative? _____
5 What might the same activity do if pursued out of chronic avoidance? _____
6 Where does the key distinction lie, according to researchers? _____

6 Rewrite each sentence using the word in capitals. Do not change the meaning.

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1 The holiday gave her a much-needed break from stress. RESPITE _____

2 He spends most of his day sitting still. SEDENTARY _____

3 The film offered a pleasant escape from reality. ESCAPISM _____

4 The walk left her feeling full of energy. INVIGORATING _____

OVER TO YOU

Write a 120-150 word account of how attitudes to leisure and rest have changed for you or someone you know, distinguishing observation from interpretation.

[ ] Use at least twelve target expressions. [ ] Control connotation carefully. [ ] Avoid unsupported assumptions.

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ANSWER KEY

1 Precise terms

1 f 2 a 3 h 4 b 5 c 6 i 7 j 8 d 9 g 10 e

2 Connotation

1 respite 2 restorative 3 escapism 4 sedentary 5 invigorating 6 monotonous 7 self-indulgent 8 idle

3 Collocations

1 respite 2 leisure 3 escapism 4 sedentary 5 invigorating 6 monotonous 7 recreational 8 unwind/relax

4 Case notes

1 respite 2 restorative 3 monotonous 4 sedentary 5 escapism 6 recreational 7 idle 8 restorative
9 leisure pursuits 10 invigorating

5 Reading - suggested answers

1 That free time must be either productive or purely restorative to count as well spent.
2 They contribute meaningfully to wellbeing.
3 Provided they are chosen freely rather than out of habit or avoidance.
4 If it follows a demanding day.
5 Deepen fatigue.
6 In the intention behind the activity, not the activity itself.

6 Rewriting - possible answers

1 The holiday gave her some respite. 2 He leads a sedentary lifestyle.
3 The film offered a form of escapism. 4 The walk was invigorating.

Over to you

Answers will vary. Check lexical precision, appropriate connotation and separation of fact from inference.