



**EFFINGHAM SECONDARY SCHOOL  
ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE  
GRADE 10 - COMPREHENSION**



**SECTION A: COMPREHENSION**

**QUESTION 1: READING FOR MEANING AND UNDERSTANDING**

Read TEXTS A and B and answer the questions set.

**TEXT A**

**SCIENCE SAYS THIS 5-SECOND RULE WILL MAKE YOUR BRAIN  
STOP PROCRASTINATING**

- 1 Let's face it. Few of us, if we're honest, wouldn't confess to occasionally procrastinating. Our lives are busy, with lots of competing priorities, so it's only natural to put off doing those things that we know are going to take more than their fair share of physical, emotional, or intellectual energy. But there are times when procrastination is about much more than juggling priorities; when it's downright debilitating and has an impact on our careers, relationships, and quality of life in ways that are unhealthy. 5
- 2 Like so many things, procrastination is a habit we fall into – then struggle to get out. The more we struggle, the further into its grasp we seem to fall. The worst part is that when we are in the throes of procrastination, it feels as though we are watching ourselves being stopped by a paper wall. What compounds the procrastination effect is that we not only get upset that we avoided what we needed to do, but then we spend the rest of the day beating ourselves up because we didn't do it. 10
- 3 Why do we procrastinate and how do we break free? 15
- 4 The answers are remarkably simple, says Mel Robbins, author of **The 5-Second Rule**. The problem is that we don't really understand procrastination. We see it as the result of being lazy, having a poor work ethic or even incompetence. All these negative terms just feed our frustration with ourselves. And all of that self-loathing ultimately shifts from 'I don't want to do it' to 'I just can't do it!' 20
- 5 Not true, says Robbins. Procrastination is not a reflection of your attitude, work ethic or competence. Procrastination is actually a behaviour meant to help us cope with stress. Whatever we are putting off is linked to something that is stressing us. Naturally, if we're stressed, we want to escape the stressor. So we do what makes sense: we try to avoid the stress and instead seek near-term satisfaction, or at least a distraction and refuge from the stress. It momentarily makes us feel good to avoid the stress. 25

- 6 But what we're actually avoiding isn't the task, but rather the stress that we associate with the task. Whether it's something we need to do for work, a relationship, or our health, procrastination is basically a coping mechanism – in fact, a survival mechanism. 30
- 7 Chalk it up to our ancestral DNA, which evolved in an environment where stress helped to avoid those things that were likely to compromise the chances for survival. If they needed to go out and hunt for food, but they also imagined that there might be wild animals running around outside the cave doing the same, they'd most likely put off getting food and find a nice corner to scratch out a few wall drawings. 35
- 8 And therein lies the wisdom in what Robbins is preaching. Knowing that provides a powerful way to suspend the negative judgement about ourselves when we procrastinate. We should rather focus on why whatever it is that we're putting off stresses us. Is the stress coming from a real threat or a perceived one? What's the worst case scenario that we're fearful of? This sort of honesty is a first step, and it's helpful in developing a new self-awareness. 40
- 9 Robbins' answer is what she calls the 5-second rule. It's incredibly simple and straightforward, but don't dismiss it because it's not overly complex. What we need is a way to alleviate the stress, not add layers to it. Here's how it works: 45
- 10 Don't analyse it or dissect it. Just accept that what you're dealing with is not a fault, defect or inability in you, but a reaction to stress. It's real and it's driving your decisions. That takes a bit of pressure off and enables your prefrontal cortex to play a role in the next decision. 50
- 11 Robbins calls this a decision of courage. 'When you act with courage, your brain is not involved. Your heart speaks first, and you listen.' In other words, rather than trying to rationalise the stress by thinking, 'How can I cope with it?' do the exact opposite and make a decision to spend the next five minutes working on whatever you are fearful of doing. Confront the stress. If it's a phone call, then pick up the phone and make the call. If it's writing, then make the decision to write whatever you can for the next five minutes. It may end up as gibberish and get tossed, or it may be brilliant. It doesn't really matter. As long as you make that five-second decision to commit five minutes, you will have broken the cycle and proven that you can confront the stress. Those five seconds are critical in both triggering the fast-acting part of the brain as well as limiting the influence of the slow-acting part of your brain, as Robbins describes in her book. So don't stretch it out to more than that. Decide and act. 60

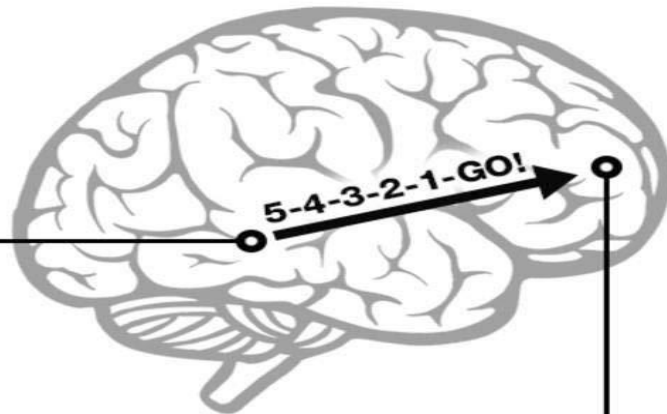
[Adapted from <https://www.in.com/tomas-koulopoulos/according-to-science-this-5-second-rule-will-make-.html>]

## HOW TO SWITCH MODES USING THE 5 SECOND RULE

Counting backwards activates the prefrontal cortex region of your brain because it requires focus and is the first action you take to replace a habit loop. It also distracts you from your worries, excuses, and thoughts.

### THE OLD YOU AKA "BASAL GANGLIA"

HABITS  
AUTOPILOT  
DEFAULT PATTERNS  
SELF-DOUBT  
WORRIES



### THE NEW YOU AKA "PREFRONTAL CORTEX"

INTENTIONAL  
CONFIDENCE  
COURAGE  
NEW PATTERNS  
NEW HABITS

[Source: Google]

#### QUESTIONS: TEXT A

- 1.1 Refer to line 1: 'Let's face it.'  
What point is the writer making? (2)
- 1.2 Refer to lines 2–3: 'so it's only natural to put off doing those things'  
Explain why it is natural to 'put off doing' things. Provide TWO reasons. (2)
- 1.3 Describe the effect of procrastination when it is 'debilitating' (line 6). (2)
- 1.4 Refer to paragraph 2.  
Procrastination can be described as a catch-22 situation. Discuss the accuracy of this statement. (2)
- 1.5 Refer to lines 10–11: 'it feels as though we are watching ourselves being stopped by a paper wall'.  
How does this comparison affect your understanding of procrastination? (3)

- 1.6 In your view, is it true that procrastination ultimately leads to a negative self-image?  
Refer to the text to justify your response. (2)
- 1.7 Refer to lines 38–39: ‘Knowing that provides a powerful way’.  
To what does the word, ‘that’ refer? (2)
- 1.8 Refer to line 43: ‘and it’s helpful in developing a new self-awareness’.  
Explain why it would be beneficial to develop ‘a new self-awareness’. (2)
- 1.9 Refer to lines 25–26.  
Discuss the appropriateness of the phrase, ‘near-term satisfaction’. (3)
- 1.10 Refer to paragraph 7.  
Comment on the effectiveness of the writer’s style in this paragraph. (3)

#### QUESTIONS: TEXT B

- 1.11 Outline the contrast between ‘the old you’ and ‘the new you’ once the 5-second rule has been implemented. (3)

#### QUESTION: TEXTS A AND B

- 1.12 Is TEXT B an accurate portrayal of the writer’s view as presented in **paragraph 11** of TEXT A? Justify your response with close reference to both TEXT A and TEXT B. (4)

**Total = 30**