

In this task, you will listen to an academic talk. You will then read four questions and choose the correct answer.

Talk 1: Economics

What is the main topic of the talk?

- ☐ How banks decide which customers can borrow money
- ☐ Why so many banks failed in the 1930s
- ☐ A danger banks face and a way to reduce it
- ☐ The history of government control over banks

Why does the speaker mention a vault?

- ☐ To describe how early banks protected money
- ☐ To introduce a common but mistaken belief
- ☐ To explain why bank deposits are safe
- ☐ To show how banks protect customers from losing money

What does the speaker imply about deposit insurance?

- ☐ It has turned out to be less effective than expected.
- ☐ It requires banks to keep all deposits on hand.
- ☐ It protects all deposits regardless of size.
- ☐ It works mainly by preventing panic.

What will the speaker most likely discuss next?

- ☐ How the government created deposit insurance in the 1930s
- ☐ How other countries protect bank deposits
- ☐ An event that revealed weaknesses in the system
- ☐ The causes of the economic crisis of the 1930s

Talk 2: Psychology

What is the main topic of the talk?

- ☐ Evidence against a popular belief
- ☐ How the brain changes throughout a person's life
- ☐ Ways to improve mental performance
- ☐ The origins of a common saying

According to the speaker, what does the brain's energy use suggest?

- ☐ The brain works hardest during sleep.
- ☐ Most of the brain must have a function.
- ☐ The brain needs more energy as people age.
- ☐ The brain uses energy in proportion to its size.

Why does the speaker mention brain injuries?

- ☐ To show that brain damage is usually permanent
- ☐ To explain how the myth first began
- ☐ To identify which areas control movement and speech
- ☐ To show that all brain areas have a purpose

What does the speaker imply about early twentieth-century writers?

- ☐ Their claim differed from the myth it may have inspired.
- ☐ They used brain scans to support their ideas.
- ☐ They believed that most people were geniuses.
- ☐ They were the first to study brain injuries.

Talk 1: Bank Runs

Listen to a talk in an economics class.

When you deposit money in a bank, you probably imagine it sitting safely in a vault. But it isn't. Banks keep only a small fraction of deposits on hand and lend out the rest. That works fine, because customers rarely all want their money at once.

The danger comes when they do. If depositors worry that a bank is in trouble, it makes sense for each of them to withdraw before others do. But since the bank can't pay everyone, the rush itself can make it fail, even if it was healthy before. This is called a bank run.

In the early 1930s, bank runs swept the United States, and thousands of banks closed. In response, the government created deposit insurance in 1933, guaranteeing that depositors would get their money back, up to a limit, even if their bank failed.

What's interesting is how this works. Once people know their deposits are safe, they have no reason to panic, so runs rarely start. In other words, the guarantee succeeds mainly by not being needed.

But the system does have limits. Next, let's look at a recent case where those limits were tested.

Talk 2: The Ten Percent Myth

Listen to a talk on a podcast about psychology.

You've probably heard the claim that humans only use ten percent of their brains. It shows up in movies, advertisements, and self-help books, usually with the promise that if we could just unlock the other ninety percent, we'd become geniuses. It's an appealing idea. Unfortunately, it's completely false.

Nobody is quite sure where the myth came from. It may have grown out of early twentieth-century writers who said people rarely reach their full mental potential, which is a very different claim.

So, what does the evidence show? First, brain imaging. When scientists scan the brain, they see activity in virtually every region over the course of a day, even during sleep. Not every area is active at the same moment, but no part sits unused.

Second, think about energy. The brain makes up only about two percent of body weight, yet it uses around twenty percent of the body's energy. It would make little evolutionary sense to maintain such expensive tissue if most of it did nothing.

And third, brain injuries. If ninety percent of the brain were unused, damage to most areas would have no effect. In reality, however, damage to almost any region causes some kind of problem, with movement, speech, memory, or emotion.

Now, there is a grain of truth here. Your brain can change and strengthen its connections throughout your life. But that's about using it better, not unlocking a hidden ninety percent.

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