Skiing

Skiing is one of the most popular sports in the world. According to recent estimates, about one hundred million people ski regularly or occasionally.

Sliding across the snow on skis is also one of the most ancient methods of transport known to man. It has been demonstrated that men were already travelling across the snow by means of primitive skis before the invention of the wheel. In the Asiatic region of Altai and in Scandinavia, for example, the remains of skis have been found which date back to 4,000 BC. Further evidence is supplied by ancient cave paintings which depict people skiing, and a Norwegian saga which tells the story of an invasion of its territory 8,000 years ago by a tribe of skiers who came from the north.

Nowadays, skiing, apart from being a sport, has become a big industry and a notable feature of leisure culture. Ski resorts and all the activity that they generate are the main source of wealth in many mountain regions, which were previously remote and inaccessible. And far from its once elitist image, skiing is now enjoyed by an increasingly broader spectrum of society.

1. Answer the following questions using your own words. (2 points: 1 point each)

a) How do we know that primitive men travelled across the snow by means of skis?
b) How has this sport benefited mountain regions?

2. Are the following statements true (T) or false (F)? (1 point: 0.5 each)

a) Primitive skis were invented before the wheel.
b) You need to have a lot of money to go skiing.

3. Find a word or phrase in the text which, in context, is similar in meaning to: (1 point: 0.5 each)

a) principal
b) wider

4. Choose a, b, or c, in each question below. Only one choice is correct. (2 points: 0.5 each)

1. Sliding across the snow on skis ...

a) is the most ancient method of transport.

b) is the most popular means of transport.

c) is one of the oldest forms of transport.

2. It has been demonstrated that ...

a) people from Altai invented skis.

b) people travelled across the snow on skis from 4,000 BC.

c) skiing was the most popular sport between 4,000 and 2,000 BC.

3. Nowadays skiing ...
   a) is a cultural tradition.
   b) is just a sport.
   c) is an important part of leisure culture.

4. At present, this sport ...
   a) is open to most people.
   b) has an elitist character.
   c) is only available to a sector of society

5. Composition (100-150 words approximately). Choose one of the following topics. (4 points)

1. Do you think that skiing is elitist, or is it open to anyone? Explain why.
2. Write a letter to a friend about an incident which happened to you in the snow.