

GIMNAZIJA CELJE – CENTER

KOSOVELOVA ULICA 1

3000 CELJE

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VAJE IZ ČASOV, GLAGOLSKIH OBLIK IN STRUKTUR V ANGLEŠKEM JEZIKU

Strokovno gradivo za učitelje angleškega jezika v programu

Splošna gimnazija in Umetniška gimnazija

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UVODNA BESEDA

V času, ko hitri digitalni mediji in kratke video vsebine narekujejo naš vsakdan, mladi vse redkeje posegajo po daljših, zahtevnejših besedilih. Raziskave potrjujejo, da se s tem ne zmanjšuje le njihova zbranost in potrpežljivost pri branju, temveč tudi razumevanje zapletenejših vsebin in sposobnost kritičnega mišljenja, pa tudi bralna pismenost. Po podatkih raziskave, objavljene na RTVSLOinfo, je bralna pismenost slovenskih 15-letnikov padla pod povprečje držav članic OECD, in sicer so devetošolci pri zadnjih nacionalnih preizkusih znanja pri maternem jeziku dosegli le 63 % točk. Znanje maternega jezika pa se zagotovo odraža tudi pri tujih jezikih, nenazadnje pa tudi pri drugih predmetih.

Prav z namenom mladim približati resnejša besedila (ob hkratni krepitvi drugih jezikovnih kompetenc) sem pripravila to strokovno gradivo, ki dijakom omogoča, da hkrati vadijo rabo angleških časov ter glagolskih struktur in ob tem berejo premišljeno izbrana novejša besedila resnega značaja, ki obravnavajo aktualne teme, hkrati pa se tesno povezujejo s snovjo, ki jo obravnavamo pri pouku.

Angleški glagolski časi so pogosto področje, kjer dijaki naredijo največ napak, saj zahtevajo natančno razumevanje pomena, konteksta in povezave med stavki ter odstavki, pravzaprav na ravni celotnega besedila. Nekatere glagolske strukture jim povzročajo težave še posebej zato, ker jih v slovenščini ni. Zato so v tem gradivu primeri in vaje zasnovani tako, da utrjujejo praktično rabo časov skozi avtentična in tematsko zanimiva besedila. Pri vsakem besedilu se bodo dijaki imeli možnost preizkusiti na različnih zahtevnostnih stopnjah, saj prav vsa besedila vsebujejo manj zahtevne, srednje zahtevne in zapletenejše structure, s čimer poskušam doseči ustrezen nivo motivacije pri vseh.

Posebna vrednost gradiva pa je v tem, da dijakov ne spodbuja le k tehničnemu znanju slovnice, temveč tudi k poglobljenemu in kritičnemu branju. Dodatno so vsa vprašanja ciljno pripravljena prav z namenom, da mlade usmerijo k temeljitemu premisleku o prebranem, jih vodijo k sintezi in povezovanju informacij ter jim pomagajo razvijati širšo sliko o vsebini in jeziku hkrati.

To gradivo bo dijakom v pomoč pri utrjevanju slovničnih znanj, hkrati pa jih bo motiviralo, da se z daljšimi, zahtevnejšimi besedili ponovno srečajo z branjem kot dragoceno veščino.

Avtorica

Urška Petrič Les, prof.

1.

<https://www.newyorker.com/books/flash-fiction/the-door-between-us>

The Door Between Us

By Mieko Kawakami

August 15, 2024

a) Insert the correct forms of the verbs.

My apartment's in an old wooden building, (1) _____ (BUILD) who knows how many years ago, just one story, with two separate units, side by side, stuck between dilapidated houses no one (2) _____ (LIVE) in anymore. Imagine three old shacks that (3) _____ (FALL DOWN) already if they weren't holding one another up, and you'll get the idea. My living space (4) _____ (CONSIST) of one tatami room, a tiny kitchen with a single-burner stove, a leaky shower. There's no storage. Out back, the space for drying clothes is all but taken up by the A.C., and it feels as though the wall of the house behind me is closing in.

There was a woman already (5) _____ (LIVE) in the unit next to mine when I moved in, but the real-estate office (6) _____ (NOT / GIVE) me her name, and the doorplate on her unit was blank and yellowed from the sun, and we'd never spoken. She (7) _____ (BE) tubby, with this scraggly long hair, always wearing the same clothes, and, not like I'm one to judge, but let's just say she didn't exactly have her act together or keep things sanitary. Nobody (8) _____ (COME) to visit her. Each time I saw her, something in her slumped-over posture told me that she was either apathetic about life, or was exhausted, or (9) _____ (GIVE UP), or maybe all of the above.

She had this tic. When she locked her door on her way out, she couldn't keep herself from (10) _____ (RATTLE) the knob, over and over, unable to accept that it (11) _____ (LOCK). The sound was so violent that, the first time I heard it, I was sure that someone scary (12) _____ (SHOW UP) to collect on a loan, but it was only her. Each time she left the house, she nearly pulled the door off its hinges, and all that yanking left noticeable cracks in the wall, between her door and mine. But, I (13) _____ (HAVE TO) say, I have a sense of how she felt. When I was younger, I went

through a period when I washed my hands so much that the bar of soap practically disappeared into my palms.

Sometimes I (14) _____ (PRESS) my ear against the wall between us.

There were days when I (15) _____ (CAN / HEAR) a TV in the background, but never any of the other sounds one might expect. Our rooms were mirror images of each other (or so I'd gathered at the real-estate office), (16) _____ (SEPARATE) by a thin wall, and sometimes, for instance, if I was washing dishes, I would catch myself (17) _____ (WONDER) if maybe she was doing the same thing at that very moment, on the other side of the wall, but facing in my direction, out of sight. And so, at times when I felt as though life were folding in on itself, I was often struck by the confounding fact that my closest neighbor was a woman whose name I didn't even know. On the way home from my part-time job, I might look up from the dead gray road that stretched off into the distance and catch sight of our two ramshackle doors, bathed in flames by the setting sun, and think about how we were twins, the two of us, grown old and lonely, side by side. When one of the doors, unable (18) _____ (WITHSTAND) so much, (19) _____ (FINALLY / CONSUME) by fire, how would the other one survive? Something about these feelings begged (20) _____ (SHARE). I'd imagine myself knocking on her door, but I was scared that I (21) _____ (BE ABLE) to express myself adequately, which made me (22) _____ (WISH) I could communicate with knocks. Tell her how life (23) _____ (NEVER / GO) the way I wanted it to. How I could never seem (24) _____ (GET) things right. How I had been unable to save the person who meant everything to me. And, most of all, how overwhelmed I was by all these feelings spilling out of me. If only I (25) _____ (CAN / LET) her know. In spring, night falls before the world becomes too blue to bear. The day I left my part-time job, as I arrived home with a head full of thoughts about my age, about the next job I would find, about the money I would need to make before I died, I saw the woman standing by the doors.

Since she wasn't yanking on the knob, she had likely just got home herself. I (26) _____ (LIVE) there for four years at that point, but this was the closest that we'd been to each other, without a wall between us. Then a smell prickled my nose, one that suggested that she hadn't bathed in quite some time. (27) _____ (FEEL) anxious, I nodded hello. She did the same. In the two seconds that we made eye contact,

I noticed that the skin around her eyes was dark and wet. When did it start raining? I thought, totally confused. But then I looked up at the sky. It (28) _____ (NOT / RAIN). She (29) _____ (CRY). Her greasy hair was pasted to her wrinkled forehead, and the concerned emotion she was holding in her sagging cheeks (30) _____ (BURN) into my memory. Words popped into my head, but I was unable to say them, much less form a sentence. As awful as I felt, I had to go; it was as if somebody (31) _____ (ELBOW) me out of the way. (32) _____ (FUMBLE) with my keys, I managed to unlock my door and went inside. For several seconds, I peered through the peephole, but I couldn't tell if she was out there. After that, there was no way I could relax. As the night (33) _____ (DRAG) on, I pressed my ear against the wall multiple times. But I heard nothing, felt nothing (34) _____ (COME) from the other side. I drank some water, sprawled out on my futon, watched TV off and on, in a vain attempt (35) _____ (DISTRACT) myself, but this persistent sense of unease was mounting, growing stronger. Again, I pressed my ear against the wall, but I heard nothing. Why (36) _____ (I CAN / NOT / SAY) something to her? The woman had been crying. I could at least have given her one of the pork buns in my shopping bag. She had been crying. A dark thought swept through my mind: I may turn out (37) _____ (BE) the last person to see her. Then I thought of my own mother, the last time I ever saw her, and my fingers touched my throat. But people don't just go away, not like that. It takes time, a lot of time, for all the parts of them you (38) _____ (HOLD) inside you to disappear. Still, as they shrink, the other parts of you get bigger, and at some point, everything you had before (39) _____ (GO).

I removed my ear from the wall and made a fist. My pulse (40) _____ (RACE). Then I took a deep breath, trying to calm down, and saw her door materialize before my eyes, there on the dirty wall between the two apartments.

I gave the door a knock, right in the middle, (41) _____ (KNOCK) slowly, twice. Knock, knock, then pausing a moment before (42) _____ (DO) it again. Two knocks, this time a little harder. Still no answer. Same as before.

So I dragged my futon right up to the wall and knocked the night away. No idea what I was doing. You idiot, I told myself. By now, she (43) _____ (PROBABLY / RUN OFF) somewhere, and (44) _____ (NEVER / COME) back. And, even if she's still in

there, she probably can't hear you anymore. But I continued knocking—knock, knock—waiting a moment before doing it again. After who knows how much of this, I fell asleep and had the strangest dreams, these bizarre patterns and shapes, and in between them I found time to knock some more.

Eventually, I (45) _____ (MUST / FALL) into a deep sleep, because the light of morning woke me. I stretched my arms and knocked again, as if I (46) _____ (PICK UP) where I had left off in the dream. But then, a moment later, I heard something. It was a knock, just one, coming from the other side. I sat up straight, (47) _____ (BLINK), and pressed my ear to the wall. I was sure I heard it, knew I heard a knock. I wasn't sure if it was saying, Hey, that's so annoying, or, Hey, I understand, or, Hey, thank you, or, Hey, please stop, or all of the above, or something else entirely, but I was sure that she (48) _____ (ANSWER) with a knock of her own. Absolutely sure. (49) _____ (LET) all the air out of my lungs, I pulled the sheets over my head, but it was morning. Time to get up. Then I remembered: I didn't have a job. And yet I wasn't really scared. Face (50) _____ (PRESS) into the pillow, I let my eyes close one more time. ♦

1. built 2. lives 3. would have fallen down 4. consists 5. living 6. wouldn't give 7. was
8. came 9. had given up 10. rattling 11. was locked 12. had shown up 13. have to 14.
pressed 15. could hear 16. separated 17. wondering 18. to withstand 19. was finally
consumed 20. to be shared 21. wouldn't be able 22. wish 23. had never gone 24. to
get 25. could have let 26. had been living 27. feeling 28. wasn't raining 29. was crying
30. was burned 31. were elbowing 32. fumbling 33. dragged 34. coming 35. to distract
36. couldn't I have said 37. to have been 38. have held 39. is gone 40. was racing 41.
Knocking 42. doing 43. has probably run off 44. is never coming 45. must have fallen
46. were picking up 47. blinking 48. had answered 49. letting 50. pressed

b) Answer the questions.

1. Narrative Voice

What narrative point of view is used in the text? How does this perspective shape the reader's understanding of the narrator's mental state?

2. Setting as Symbol

The narrator describes their apartment in great detail. What symbolic meaning might the decaying, cramped living space hold in relation to the narrator's inner life?

3. **Character Foil**

In what ways does the unnamed neighbour function as a foil for the narrator?

4. **Isolation and Connection**

How does the thin wall between the apartments serve as both a barrier and a connection between the narrator and the neighbour?

5. **Unreliable Narrator?**

Based on the narrator's reflections and actions, do you consider the narrator reliable or unreliable? Support your answer with textual evidence.

6. **Parallelism**

Identify an example of parallelism in the narrator's descriptions of themselves and the neighbour. What effect does this parallelism create?

7. **Obsessive Behaviour**

How does the narrator's recollection about compulsive handwashing deepen our understanding of their reaction to the neighbour's door-locking tic?

8. **Symbolism of Knocking**

What does the act of knocking symbolize in the final paragraphs of the text?

9. **Critical Inference**

Why might the narrator feel unable to speak to the neighbour directly but feel compelled to "communicate" through the wall?

10. **Imagery**

Find an example of vivid imagery in the passage. How does it contribute to the mood of the story?

11. **Ambiguity**

At the end, the narrator hears a single knock back. Do you think this actually happened, or is it a projection of the narrator's desires? Explain.

12. **Theme of Failure**

How does the narrator's repeated reference to personal failure connect to their interaction with the neighbour?

13. **Emotional Contagion**

How does the narrator's perception of the neighbour's sadness amplify their own feelings of despair?

14. **Symbolic Use of Light**

What is the significance of the description of the setting sun "bathing" the doors in flames?

15. **Intertextual Connection**

Can you draw any connections between this text and other works you know that explore urban loneliness or fragile human connections?

16. Motif of Sound

How does the motif of sound—rattling locks, knocking, silence—convey the narrator’s psychological state?

17. Logical Inference

What can be inferred about the narrator’s past relationship with their mother, and how might this influence their reaction to the neighbour?

18. Contradictions

The narrator expresses both fear and desire to connect. How do these contradictions drive the narrative tension?

19. Narrative Structure

How does the writer use shifts between past recollections and present observations to build tension?

20. Title Suggestion

If you were to give this text a title that reflects its core conflict or emotion, what would it be? Explain your choice.

2.

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<https://www.newyorker.com/business/currency/the-long-term-costs-of-fining-juvenile-offenders>

The Long-Term Costs of Fining Juvenile Offenders

By Eric Markowitz

December 24, 2016

a) Insert the correct forms of the verbs.

Amir Whitaker, who was born in 1984, (1) _____ (LIVE) in many places, including a brick house he shared with fourteen relatives in Plainfield, New Jersey. He slept on a suede couch pockmarked with cigarette burns. Whitaker's father (2) _____ (BE) in and out of prison, and many of his relatives — including his mother, aunts, and uncles — (3) _____ (ADDICT) to drugs. The family got by on his grandparents' Social Security checks.

Drugs were the through line of Whitaker's childhood, and when he turned fifteen crack addicts (4) _____ (BECOME) his clients. "I (5) _____ (SELL) drugs, but I fully believe it was a crime of poverty," Whitaker said. He is now thirty-two and recently published a memoir in which he recounts his family's addictions and run-ins with the law. "It was a response to (6) _____ (NOT / BE / ABLE) to provide. When you're in high school and you're having to provide breakfast for yourself, I had no other opportunities. It was the economy of the neighborhood."

Whitaker was perhaps not the archetypal drug dealer: in between crack sales, he (7) _____ (READ) poetry and fiction. In his memoir, he writes of once greeting his customers with, "What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore? Quote the Raven ... nevermore ... muthafu..! Twenty dollas please." In the summer of 2000, the Plainfield police department raided the house he (8) _____ (LIVE) in at the time. Whitaker, still a juvenile, was arrested with his mother and two others. He (9) _____ (CHARGE) with possession and intent (10) _____ (DISTRIBUTE) a controlled substance. After two days in a juvenile-detention facility, he was released into the custody of his aunt.

At his sentencing hearing, about six months later, Whitaker avoided further jail time, but the judge ordered him on probation, revoked his driver's license, and imposed a fine of

about two thousand dollars, which to Whitaker was a princely sum. “I (11) _____ (HAVE) that amount of money, even when selling drugs,” Whitaker said. “For me, twenty dollars was the world.” He threatened (12) _____ (LEAVE) the country if he couldn’t find a way to pay.

At the age of sixteen, Whitaker managed to get a job at a Burger King, (13) _____ (MAKE) \$5.15 an hour, but, every time he met with his probation officer, he was required (14) _____ (PAY) at least a token amount so that he didn’t violate his probation for non-payment. As the fines loomed, Whitaker, (15) _____ (FEEL) out of options, said that he began selling drugs again—“small amounts on the side,” as he says—simply to help (16) _____ (PAY) off his court debt. “There was no support, no social worker,” he said. “You (17) _____ (THINK) the best intervention would be a workforce-development program, or some sort of employment—or something. There was none of that. It was just punishment and urine tests.” He refused (18) _____ (BELIEVE) the system would ever help him out of poverty.

Whitaker’s story had an unusual resolution. Through a combination of grit and his self-described “thirst for knowledge,” he managed (19) _____ (FINISH) high school. He then earned bachelor’s degree from Rutgers, a doctorate in educational psychology from the University of Southern California, and then, two years ago, a law degree from the University of Miami. Today, he (20) _____ (BE) a staff attorney at the Southern Poverty Law Center in Florida, and the founder of Project KnuckleHead, a nonprofit for young people ensnared in the juvenile-justice system.

Whitaker (21) _____ (ADMIT) that he never actually did pay off the entire two thousand dollars. But it is nonetheless a reminder to him of the weight debt can put on young people who (22) _____ (CATCH) in the criminal-justice system.

Over the past several years, there (23) _____ (BE) a great deal of research (24) _____ (DETAIL) how fines and fees in the adult criminal-justice system drive already impoverished people into debt, increase rates of recidivism, and lead to the incarceration of people simply because they can’t pay their court bills. In March, 2016, lawyers within the civil-rights division of the Department of Justice wrote a scathing letter to their colleagues detailing how monetary punishments caused thousands of people “(25) _____ (FACE) repeated, unnecessary incarceration for nonpayment despite (26) _____ (POSE) no danger to the community.” This past spring, the

Vera Institute of Justice launched a new initiative that (27) _____ (EXAMINE) how fines and fees lead to an “overreliance on local incarceration that exacts significant unnecessary costs on individuals.”

Most of the research, however, has focussed on adults, and, in an effort (28) _____ (DISCOVER) how fines affected juveniles, Alex Piquero, a criminology professor at the University of Texas at Dallas, teamed up with the Juvenile Law Center (J.L.C.), a national nonprofit advocacy group based in Philadelphia. The results of their study (29) _____ (PUBLISH) this past summer in a report that (30) _____ (DESCRIBE) children locked up for relatively minor infractions and saddled with thousands of dollars of debt for basic court and incarceration costs.

The J.L.C. found that the vast majority of states (31) _____ (IMPOSE) some kind of fines on juveniles. The report documents that in twenty states, the law authorizes courts (32) _____ (COLLECT) payment from children or their families to cover the cost of probation or supervision.

The J.L.C. surveyed lawyers, court professionals, and adults who (33) _____ (INCARCERATE) as children. “I claim (34) _____ (WITNESS) families use their food budget to pay these fees,” one survey participant said. Many families also took on debt as a result of having a child in the juvenile-justice system, and some of those debts can linger well into a child’s adulthood. “The problem of young people or their families (35) _____ (CHARGE) money to pay for a public defender or court-appointed attorney is actually widespread,” Feierman said. “This obviously raises a serious concern about young people (36) _____ (PUSH) deeper into the system just because they can’t pay for their attorneys.” Feierman warned them (37) _____ (NOT / UNDERESTIMATE) this problem.

Piquero and Wesley Jennings, a professor of criminology at the University of South Florida, analyzed the cases of more than a thousand adolescent offenders in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. They found that an increase in fines assessed on children directly correlated to a rise in recidivism. Piquero said that Whitaker’s story of selling drugs in order to pay court costs doesn’t surprise him: (38) _____ (BURDEN) by court debt, many children (39) _____ (PRESSURE) back into criminal activity simply to pay their bills. “I hate to use the words ‘vicious cycle,’ because it’s used for everything,” Piquero said. “But, in this case, it really does basically spin around like a hamster wheel.”

Piquero argued that courts should consider more community-service programs, or at least apply reasonable fees. “If we (40) _____ (MAKE) the kid pay for the drug test, for example, how (41) _____ (WE / DO) that in a way where we don’t overburden him and his family?” he said.

Since every jurisdiction (42) _____ (HAVE) its own rules, changes happen slowly, one city or state at a time. In Alameda County, California, which includes Oakland, for instance, the board of supervisors recently unanimously voted to put a moratorium on all fees for probation and incarceration of juvenile offenders. Previously, juveniles were charged “\$25.29 for each night in Juvenile Hall, \$15.00 per day for electronic ankle monitoring, \$90 a month for probation supervision, a \$250 probation investigation fee, and a \$300 public defender fee,” according to the East Bay Community Law Center.

Whitaker sees changes like these as a good sign, but, ultimately, he said, they fail to address the core problem with the juvenile-justice system, which (43) _____ (PUNISH) juvenile defenders rather than treating or rehabilitating them. “With the fines, it’s like, the system has got you,” Whitaker said. “Even if you’re free right now, you owe them. And it’s nothing to take lightly. Because of lot of crime, a lot of bad behavior — it (44) _____ (RELATE) to money.”

1. has lived 2. was 3. were addicted 4. would become 5. was selling 6. not being able
7. would read 8. was living 9. was charged 10. to distribute 11. had never had 12. to
leave 13. making 14. to pay 15. feeling 16. pay 17. would think 18. to believe 19. to
finish 20. is 21. admits 22. are caught 23. has been 24. detailing 25. to face 26.
posing 27. will examine 28. to discover 29. were published 30. describes 31. impose
32. to collect 33. had been incarcerated 34. to have witnessed 35. being charged 36.
being pushed 37. not to underestimate 38. burdened 39. will be pressured 40. are
going to make 41. do we do 42. has 43. is punishing 44. is related

b) Answer the questions.

1. What social and economic conditions in Whitaker’s childhood contributed to his involvement in selling drugs?
2. Whitaker describes his drug dealing as a “crime of poverty.” Do you agree with this framing? Why or why not?
3. Why does Whitaker quote poetry while selling drugs? What does this reveal about his character or mindset?

4. In what ways did the juvenile-justice system fail Whitaker, according to the text?
5. How did court-imposed fines create a cycle of recidivism for Whitaker?
6. What does Whitaker's statement "For me, twenty dollars was the world" tell us about the psychological impact of poverty?
7. Consider the alternatives Whitaker suggests for dealing with young offenders. What are they and why might they be more effective?
8. Why is it significant that Whitaker never paid off his entire fine? What does this symbolize?
9. How does the J.L.C. report expand our understanding of the impact of fines on juveniles nationwide?
10. Why do you think most research has focused on adults rather than juveniles until recently?
11. What is the "vicious cycle" that Piquero refers to? Do you think this metaphor is appropriate? Why?
12. What are the implications of charging minors for court-appointed attorneys?
13. How does the Alameda County example show the potential for reform? What limitations does Whitaker see in such reforms?
14. Whitaker says, "It's nothing to take lightly." What does this imply about the long-term effects of court debt?
15. What does Whitaker's educational journey suggest about the role of personal agency vs. structural barriers?
16. How does the repeated reference to money shape the reader's understanding of crime in poor communities?
17. Why does Piquero propose community-service programs as an alternative to fines? What are the potential benefits and drawbacks?
18. What does the text suggest about the relationship between punishment and rehabilitation in the juvenile-justice system?
19. How might Whitaker's work at the Southern Poverty Law Center and Project KnuckleHead reflect his personal experiences?
20. After reading this text, what changes would you recommend to the juvenile-justice system? Justify your suggestions using evidence from the text.

3.

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<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/open-questions/should-we-think-of-our-children-as-strangers>

Should We Think of Our Children as Strangers?

A new line of inquiry asks us to imagine them as random individuals who just happen to live in our homes.

By Joshua Rothman

August 20, 2024

a) Insert the correct forms of the verbs.

Being a parent raises so many urgent, concrete questions — (1) _____ (THIS MOVIE / CAUSE) nightmares? Is this enough sunscreen? — that the abstract ones often slip beneath the surface, only (2) _____ (EMERGE) later, unbidden. In the morning, (3) _____ (MAKE) breakfast, you can look up from the waffle mix to see your kids and think, Wait — did I make these people? On lifeguard duty, you can feel suddenly watched by an imaginary adult version of the child in the pool and wonder, How much of that grownup already exists, and how much has yet to arrive? Parents (4) _____ (KNOW) their children with astonishing, intimate specificity, and yet each child is also an unknown — a whole and separate individual (5) _____ (LIVE) an independent life in your house. This duality contributes to both the challenge and the thrill of raising children.

The fact that children are their own people can come as a surprise to parents. This is partly because young kids are so hopelessly dependent, but it also reflects how we think about parenthood. Before we (6) _____ (HAVE) children, we often ask ourselves if we want them; we mull whether (7) _____ (HAVE) them will make us happier or more mature, or bring meaning to our lives, or in some sense fulfill our destinies. We talk as though having children is mainly “a matter of inclination, of personal desire, of appetite,” the philosopher Mara van der Lugt writes, in “Begetting: What Does It Mean to Create a Child?” She sees this as totally backward. Like Dr. Frankenstein, we (8) _____ (NEGLECT) the monster’s point of view. What will our possible children think of their existence? Will they be glad they’ve been born, or curse us for ushering them into being? Having children, van der Lugt argues, might (9) _____ (BEST / SEE) as “a cosmic intervention, something great, and wondrous — and terrible.”

We are deciding “that life is worth living on behalf of a person who (10) _____ (CAN / NOT / CONSULT),” and we “must be prepared, at any point, (11) _____ (HOLD) accountable for their creation.”

From a historical perspective, these may be new concerns. Before contraception, van der Lugt writes, people used (12) _____ (JUST / HAVE) children in the course of life, whether they wanted them or not. Back then, it was God who (13) _____ (SHOULDER) the moral burden of being “the creator”; we turned to him, perplexed, to ask why he (14) _____ (BOTHER) to make us even though “man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.” Today, though, we are all creators, and so the theological (15) _____ (BECOME) personal.

“Begetting,” accordingly, reacts to a larger movement to reconsider the ethics of procreation. Against “pronatalists” — among them Donald Trump’s Vice-Presidential nominee, J. D. Vance — who urge us (16) _____ (HAVE) more kids on practical, moral, and existential grounds, “anti-natalists” maintain that having children may be morally wrong, perhaps because it increases the total quantity of suffering in the universe (life is hard!) or because it pushes the planet closer to ecological collapse. Van der Lugt is not pronatalist, but she isn’t anti-natalist, either. Her contention is simply that we (17) _____ (CONFRONT) these questions more directly. Typically, she observes, it’s people who don’t want kids who (18) _____ (ASK) to explain themselves. Maybe it should work the other way, so that, when someone says that they want kids, people ask, “Why?”

The problem is that it’s hard to say. Van der Lugt inventories the reasons why people have children, (19) _____ (RANK) them from callow (conformity, boredom, satisfying your parents) to admirable (purpose, companionship, happiness, love). Yet she finds that even the best, most sincere reasons come up short: life can be full of struggle and is possibly meaningless, death is inevitable and sometimes painful, and “love alone cannot justify all things.” (As a rule, philosophers (20) _____ (NOT / EASILY / SATISFY).) Van der Lugt concludes that having kids is such a big deal — especially to the kids — that nothing we can say is really equal to it. And so we might proceed with a sense of trepidation, hand-wavy gratitude, (21) _____ (ADMIT) to ourselves that our future kids could decide that what we’re doing is outrageous. Van der Lugt cites the example of a Flemish couple who took “parental vows” at their city hall. “In the presence

of witnesses and a local magistrate, they (22) _____ (PROMISE) their child things such as safety, a proper education, no violence, and to keep the child's interests at heart in the case of conflicts," she reports. Many parents, probably most of them, hope (23) _____ (GIVE) such things to their children. But the import of those hopes is different when you express them in public, possibly (24) _____ (ADDRESS) someone who hasn't yet been born. It's as though you're humbling yourself before the judgment of the independent person your child (25) _____ (SOMEDAY / BECOME).

What about after we have kids? In a 2014 book, "Family Values: The Ethics of Parent-Child Relationships," the philosopher Harry Brighthouse and the political theorist Adam Swift ask how we might relate to our children if we (26) _____ (UNDERSTAND) them, from the beginning of their lives, as independent individuals. There's a tension, they write, between the ideals of a liberal society and the widely held "proprietary view" of children: "The idea that children in some sense belong to their parents continues (27) _____ (INFLUENCE) many who reject the once-common view that wives belong to their husbands," they note. But what's the alternative? What would a family look like if the fundamental separateness of children (28) _____ (TAKE) for granted, even during the years when they depend on us the most?

Just as van der Lugt explores the mysteries of begetting by trying to justify it from first principles, so Brighthouse and Swift ask, "Why parents?" They entertain a few non-parental ways of raising kids: "state-regulated quasi-orphanages, in which children (29) _____ (RAISE) by trained and specialized employees"; kibbutz-like institutions that combine parents with "designated child-raising specialists"; and communes in which "a large group of adults collectively and jointly raises a group of children," with no one (30) _____ (BE) particularly responsible for anyone else. Although there are theoretical reasons for favoring such arrangements — it's possible to imagine that a state-run quasi-orphanage might treat its charges equally, for example, whereas some families are richer than others — they conclude, after an extensive discussion, that "children have a right (31) _____ (RAISE) by parents." This is because kids have a more general right to a good upbringing, and such an upbringing is "best delivered by particular people who interact with them continuously during the course of their

development.” Steady, attentive caregivers — biological or not — are best suited to deliver “familial relationship goods.”

This is an odd, even torturous way to think about something as familiar as the family. And yet it yields interesting results. If the relationship between parents and children (32) _____ (BASE) not on the proprietary “ownership” of kids by their parents but on the right of children to a certain kind of upbringing, then it (33) _____ (MAKE) sense to ask what parents must do to satisfy that right — and, conversely, what’s irrelevant to satisfying it. Brighthouse and Swift, after (34) _____ (PUSH) and prodding their ideas in various ways, conclude that their version of the family is a little less dynastic than usual. Some people, for instance, think that parents (35) _____ (ENTITLE) to do everything they can to give their children advantages in life. But, as the authors see it, some ways of seeking to advantage your children—from (36) _____ (LEAVE) them inheritances to paying for elite schooling — are not part of the bundle of “familial relationship goods” to which kids have a right; in fact, (37) _____ (CONFUSE) these transactional acts for those goods — love, presence, moral tutelage, and so on — would be a mistake. This isn’t to say that parents mustn’t give their kids huge inheritances or send them to private schools. But it is to say that, if the government decides to raise the inheritance tax, it isn’t interfering with some sacred parental right.

Similarly, we often think that parents are entitled (38) _____ (PASS) their values onto their children. Are they? To a great extent, passing on your values is a natural consequence of having an authentic relationship with your kids. But not always. Children have a right to become more autonomous as they (39) _____ (GROW) older, Swift and Brighthouse write; they are entitled to the kind of parent-child relationship that encourages them to develop ever greater intellectual and emotional agency. Good parents, therefore, insure that their children have “the cognitive skills and information needed for autonomy,” while (40) _____ (RESTRAIN) themselves from adding too much to “the emotional costs borne by their children should they decide to reject the parents’ views.” It’s all right to raise your children to be progressive or conservative, religious or secular, athletic or bookish. But it’s wrong to make it too hard for them to renounce your way of life. “For parents to raise their children successfully they must

establish themselves as loving authorities,” the authors write. A loving authority isn’t an ultimate one.

In the epigraph to their book, Brighthouse and Swift quote from “On Children,” a poem by Kahlil Gibran:

*Your children are not your children.
They are the sons and daughters of Life’s longing for itself.
They come through you but not from you,
And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.*

“The basic point is simple,” they write. “Children are separate people, with their own lives (41) _____ (LEAD), and the right to make, and act on, their own judgments about how they are to live those lives. They are not the property of their parents.”

But what about the nightmares, and the sunscreen etc.? Someone has to be in charge of it all—or, at least, to try to be. Books like “Begetting” and “Family Values” can seem, at times, cartoonish — the philosophical equivalent of my son protesting, “You’re not the boss of me!” Yet they actually trace a subtle line, (42) _____ (IDENTIFY) an insoluble balancing act. Clearly, there are parents who actually feel that their kids are extensions of themselves; they (43) _____ (CAN / SPOT) on the sidelines at soccer games, gnashing their teeth and pulling their hair. Even the most well-adjusted parenting, however, contains an element of self-defeat. (44) _____ (BE) a good parent — arguably, to even become a parent — you need to exercise your power. But that power is always slipping through your fingers, (45) _____ (UNDERMINE) by the unpredictability of life, your children’s resistance and liveliness, and the passage of time. Gibran’s poem can read like advice, but it might not be. It (46) _____ (CAN / JUST / BE) an articulation of something parents are always coming to know. A person’s life can never be fully explained, justified, or contained—not your child’s, and not your own.

It is not surprising, then, that some parents later denied (47) _____ (PRESSURE) their children to follow a certain path, while others (48) _____ (ACCUSE) of imposing beliefs instead of encouraging autonomy. By the time today’s debates reach new generations, many of these old ideas (49) _____ (FADE), yet new conflicts about parenthood (50) _____ (CREATE). Modern families are believed (51)

_____ (REDEFINE) traditional roles every day, and young parents are thought (52) _____ (SEEK) fairer ways to balance rights and duties. One father is said to (53) _____ (SEE) campaigning for more inclusive parental leave, and one mother is reported (54) _____ (LEAVE) her corporate job to advocate for equal childcare responsibilities. ♦

1. Will this movie cause 2. to emerge 3. making 4. know 5. living 6. have 7. having 8. are neglecting 9. be best seen 10. cannot be consulted 11. to be held 12. to just have 13. shouldered 14. had bothered 15. has become 16. to have 17. should confront 18. are asked 19. ranking 20. are not easily satisfied 21. admitting 22. promised 23. to give 24. addressing 25. will someday become 26. understand 27. to influence 28. was taken 29. are raised 30. being 31. to be raised 32. is based 33. makes 34. pushing 35. are entitled 36. leaving 37. confusing 38. to pass 39. grow 40. restraining 41. to lead 42. identifying 43. can be spotted 44. To be 45. undermined 46. could just be 47. having pressured 48. were accused 49. will have faded 50. will have been created 51. to be redefining 52. to be seeking 53. to have been seen 54. to have left

b) Answer the questions.

1. How does the author use the example of breakfast and lifeguard duty to illustrate the paradox of parenthood? Explain how these everyday moments connect to the larger philosophical questions discussed.
2. What does Mara van der Lugt mean when she calls having children “a cosmic intervention”? Do you agree with this characterization based on the arguments presented? Why or why not?
3. Compare the historical view of procreation described by van der Lugt with the modern ethical debates. What major shift has occurred, and how does it affect parents’ sense of responsibility?
4. Why does van der Lugt argue that we might be neglecting ‘the monster’s point of view’? What does this reference imply about how we approach parenthood?
5. The text says that parents ‘know their children with astonishing, intimate specificity’ yet each child is ‘an unknown’. How does this contradiction shape the ethical responsibility of parents, according to the author?
6. How does the concept of parental vows in Flanders reinforce or challenge the main idea that children are independent individuals? Explain your reasoning.
7. What tension do Brighouse and Swift identify between liberal ideals and the ‘proprietary view’ of children? How does this tension complicate the idea of family?

8. Why do Brighthouse and Swift conclude that children should be raised by parents rather than in quasi-orphanages or communal settings? How convincing do you find their reasoning?
9. What is meant by the 'familial relationship goods' in Brighthouse and Swift's argument? Give an example of something they consider not to be a familial relationship good and explain why.
10. How do Brighthouse and Swift distinguish between loving authority and ultimate authority? Why is this distinction important for a child's autonomy?
11. Why might raising inheritance taxes not violate any sacred parental right, according to Brighthouse and Swift? Explain how this connects to their broader view of what parents owe their children.
12. In what way does Kahlil Gibran's poem serve as an epigraph to Brighthouse and Swift's argument? How does it help frame their central message?
13. The author suggests that philosophical discussions about parenthood can seem "cartoonish." Why does the text make this claim, and do you think this critique is fair? Why or why not?
14. Why does the text describe parenting as 'an insoluble balancing act'? Give two examples from the text that illustrate this point.
15. Explain how the unpredictability of life, children's resistance, and the passage of time collectively undermine parental power. How does this idea relate back to the text's opening scenario?
16. What connection can you make between the modern debates on parental leave and equal childcare and the core argument that children are separate, autonomous people?
17. Why do you think the author mentions parents who later deny pressuring their children? How does this relate to the tension between passing on values and fostering autonomy?
18. The text implies that modern families 'redefine traditional roles.' What evidence is provided to support this, and how does it connect with the ethical questions raised about procreation and upbringing?
19. If you accept van der Lugt's view that 'love alone cannot justify all things,' what does that imply for people deciding to have children today? How might this perspective influence society?
20. The author writes: "A person's life can never be fully explained, justified, or contained — not your child's, and not your own." How does this final thought encapsulate the overall message of the text?

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<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/2023-in-review/the-year-ai-ate-the-internet>

The Year A.I. Ate the Internet

Call 2023 the year many of us learned to communicate, create, cheat, and collaborate with robots.

By Sue Halpern

December 8, 2023

a) Insert the correct forms of the verbs.

A little more than a year ago, the world (1) _____ (SEEM) to wake up to the promise and dangers of artificial intelligence when OpenAI released ChatGPT, an application that (2) _____ (ENABLE) users to converse with a computer in a singularly human way. Within five days, the chatbot (3) _____ (HAVE) a million users. Within two months, it (4) _____ (LOG) a hundred million monthly users — a number that (5) _____ (NOW / NEARLY / DOUBLE). Call this the year many of us learned to communicate, create, cheat, and collaborate with robots.

Shortly after ChatGPT came out, Google released its own chatbot, Bard; Microsoft incorporated OpenAI's model into its Bing search engine; Meta debuted LLaMA; and Anthropic came out with Claude, a "next generation AI assistant for your tasks, no matter the scale." Suddenly, the Internet seemed nearly animate. It wasn't that A.I. itself (6) _____ (BE) new: indeed, artificial intelligence (7) _____ (BECOME) such a routine part of our lives that we hardly recognize it when a Netflix algorithm recommends a film, a credit-card company automatically detects fraudulent activity, or Amazon's Alexa delivers a summary of the morning's news.

But, while those A.I.s work in the background, often in a scripted and brittle way, chatbots are responsive and improvisational. They are also unpredictable. When we ask for their assistance, (8) _____ (PROMPT) them with queries about things we (9) _____ (NOT / KNOW), or asking them for creative help, they often generate things that (10) _____ (NOT / EXIST) before, seemingly out of thin air. Poems, literature reviews, essays, research papers, and three-act plays (11) _____ (DELIVER) in plain, unmistakably human language. It's as if the god in the machine (12)

_____ (MAKE) in our image. (13) _____ (ASK) ChatGPT to write a song about self-driving cars in the style of Johnny Cash and you might get a lyric like this:

*Ridin' solo, but I'm never alone,
Got my AI ridin' shotgun, steady as a stone.
On the endless road, under the sky so vast,
A ghost driver at the wheel, footprints of the past.*

Ask it to write a song about self-driving cars in the style of Giuseppe Verdi, and ChatGPT sets the scene of a tenor singing:

Ecco la carrozza senza cavallo! (Behold the carriage without a horse!)
Scivola nella notte, silenziosa come il fato. (It glides through the night, silent as fate.)
L'ingegno dell'uomo, l'orgoglio del progresso, (Man's ingenuity, the pride of progress,)
In questa danza d'acciaio, tessiamo il nostro destino. (In this steel dance, we weave our destiny.)

Though unlikely (14) _____ (WIN) many awards, at least so far, chatbots such as ChatGPT make our smart devices sound stupid. They (15) _____ (NOT / ONLY / KNOW) foreign languages, but also coding languages; they can quickly summarize lengthy legal and financial documents; they (16) _____ (START) to diagnose medical conditions; they can pass the bar exam without studying. On the flip side, we (17) _____ (MAY / TRICK) into thinking that A.I. models are actually — rather than artificially — intelligent, and that they understand the meaning and implications of the content they (18) _____ (DELIVER). They do not. They are, in the words of the linguist Emily Bender and three co-authors, “stochastic parrots.” It (19) _____ (SHOULD / NOT / FORGET) that, before A.I. could be considered intelligent, it had to swallow up a vast tranche of human intelligence. And, before we learned how to collaborate with robots, robots had to (20) _____ (TEACH) how to collaborate with us.

(21) _____ (EVEN / BEGIN) to understand how these chatbots work, we had to master new vocabulary, from “large language models” (L.L.M.s) and “neural networks”

to “natural-language processing” (N.L.P.) and “generative A.I.” By now, we know the broad strokes: chatbots gobbled up the Internet and analyzed it with a kind of machine learning that (22) _____ (MIMIC) the human brain; they string together words statistically, based on which words and phrases typically belong together. Still, the sheer inventiveness of artificial intelligence remains largely inscrutable, as we found out when chatbots “hallucinate.”

Google’s Bard, for example, invented information about the James Webb telescope. Microsoft’s Bing insisted that the singer Billie Eilish performed at the 2023 Super Bowl halftime show. “I did not comprehend that ChatGPT could fabricate cases,” said an attorney whose federal court brief was found to be full of phony citations and made-up judicial opinions (23) _____ (SUPPLY) by ChatGPT. (The court issued a fine of five thousand dollars.) In fine print, ChatGPT acknowledges that it may not be reliable: “ChatGPT can make mistakes. Consider checking important information.” Weirdly, a recent study suggests that, in the last year, ChatGPT (24) _____ (GROW) less accurate when (25) _____ (ASK) to perform certain tasks. Researchers theorize that this has something to do with the material that it’s trained on — but, since OpenAI (26) _____ (NOT / SHARE) what it is using to train its L.L.M., this is just conjecture.

The knowledge that chatbots make mistakes (27) _____ (NOT / STOP) high-school and college students from (28) _____ (BE) some of their most avid early adopters, using chatbots to research and write their papers, complete problem sets, and write code. (During finals week, last May, a student of mine took a walk through the library and saw that just about every laptop was open to ChatGPT.) More than half of young people who (29) _____ (RESPOND) to a recent Junior Achievement survey said that using a chatbot to help with schoolwork was, in their view, cheating. Yet nearly half said that they were likely to use it.

School administrators were no less conflicted. They couldn’t seem (30) _____ (DECIDE) if chatbots are agents of deception or tools for learning. In January, David Banks, the New York City schools chancellor, (31) _____ (BAN) ChatGPT; a spokesperson told the *Washington Post* that the chatbot “does not build critical-thinking and problem-solving skills, which are essential for academic and lifelong success.” Four months later, Banks reversed the ban, calling it “knee-jerk” and fear-based, and saying

that it “overlooked the potential of generative AI to support students and teachers, as well as the reality that our students (32) _____ (PARTICIPATE) in and will work in a world where understanding generative AI is crucial.” Then there was a professor at Texas A&M who decided to use ChatGPT to root out students who cheated with ChatGPT. After the bot determined that the whole class had done so, the professor threatened (33) _____ (FAIL) everyone. The problem was that ChatGPT was hallucinating. (There are other A.I. programs to catch cheaters; chatbot detection is a growth industry.) In a sense, we are all that professor, beta-testing products whose capacities we may overestimate, misconstrue, or simply not understand.

Artificial intelligence is already used to generate financial reports, ad copy, and sports news. In March, Greg Brockman, a co-founder of OpenAI and its president, predicted — cheerfully — that in the future chatbots (34) _____ (ALSO / HELP) write film scripts, and rewrite scenes that viewers didn’t like. Two months later, the Writers Guild of America went on strike, (35) _____ (DEMAND) a contract that (36) _____ (PROTECT) us all from crummy A.I.-generated movies. They sensed that any A.I. platform that is able to produce credible work in many human domains could be an existential threat to creativity itself.

In September, while screenwriters (37) _____ (NEGOTIATE) an end to their five-month strike, (38) _____ (PERSUADE) the studios to swear off A.I. scripts, the Authors Guild, along with a group of prominent novelists, (39) _____ (FILE) a class-action suit against OpenAI. They alleged that, when the company vacuumed up the Web, it used their copyrighted work without consent or compensation. Though the writers couldn’t know for sure that the company (40) _____ (APPROPRIATE) their books, given OpenAI’s less-than-open policy on sharing its training data, the complaint noted that, early on, ChatGPT would respond to queries about specific books with verbatim quotations, “suggesting that the underlying LLM (41) _____ (MUST / INGEST) these books in their entirety.” (Now the chatbot (42) _____ (RETRAIN) to say, “I can’t provide verbatim excerpts from copyrighted texts.”) Some businesses now sell prompts to help users to impersonate well-known writers. And a writer who can be effortlessly impersonated might not be worth very much.

In March, more than a thousand technologists, including Elon Musk and Steve Wozniak, a co-founder of Apple, signed a letter calling on A.I. companies (43) _____

(PAUSE) work on their most advanced technology for six months, to make room for some kind of regulation. It read, in part:

Should we let machines flood our information channels with propaganda and untruth? *Should* we automate away all the jobs, (44) _____ (INCLUDE) the fulfilling ones? *Should* we develop nonhuman minds that might eventually outnumber, outsmart, obsolete and replace us? *Should* we risk loss of control of our civilization? Such decisions (45) _____ (MUST / NOT / DELEGATE) to unelected tech leaders. These were not theoretical concerns. A research team from I.B.M., for example, needed only five minutes to trick ChatGPT into (46) _____ (WRITE) highly persuasive phishing e-mails. Other researchers have used generative A.I. to write malware that can bypass safety protocols, (47) _____ (MAKE) it a potential resource for cybercriminals. Goldman Sachs has estimated that A.I. could soon replace three hundred million full-time jobs.

Not surprisingly, there was no pause, and there (48) _____ (BE) no meaningful regulation. Instead, at the end of October, the Biden Administration issued an “Executive Order on the Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence,” a lengthy document that (49) _____ (READ) more like a wish list than an order. It suggests that the executive branch is engaged in a complicated balancing act between A.I.’s perils and possibilities. Just a week later, OpenAI announced a new suite of products, including an A.I. model that can read prompts as long as a three-hundred-page book; a build-your-own-chatbot kit; and something called “copyright shield,” which promises to pay the legal fees of developers (50) _____ (ACCUSE) of copyright infringement.

The commercial development of generative A.I. is likely to continue unabated. A.I. (51) _____ (INFLUENCE) an increasing number of complex activities, such as radiology, drug discovery, psychotherapy, hiring, and college admissions. Companies will build it into the next generation of hardware. Samsung, for example, is likely (52) _____ (INCORPORATE) generative A.I. into its forthcoming flagship phones, which it will unveil in January. Sam Altman, the OpenAI co-founder who recently boomeranged out of — and then back into — the role of C.E.O., (53) _____ (REPORTEDLY / COLLABORATE) with Jony Ive, the famed Apple designer, to create “the

iPhone of artificial intelligence.” We may look back on 2023 with a kind of nostalgia, for a time when intelligence (54) _____ (NOT / YET / BECOME) a product.

If companies continue to invest billions without any oversight, it is inevitable that within the next decade we (55) _____ (WITNESS) a technological shift more radical than any before. Many experts have suggested (56) _____ (SET UP) independent councils to monitor how A.I. is trained, but few governments have had the necessary frameworks (57) _____ (PUT) in place. Some CEOs have even boasted about (58) _____ (CIRCUMVENT) regulations altogether, claiming that innovation must not be slowed down by bureaucracy. If regulators had acted sooner, the public (59) _____ (MIGHT/SPARE) the current uncertainty. Meanwhile, tech leaders have insisted on journalists (60) _____ (REPORT) only the benefits, though whistleblowers argue that dark sides are systematically ignored. Rumors spread that one major firm had its data center (61) _____ (UPGRADE) so covertly that even local authorities weren’t informed. Should this trend persist, we will have allowed private interests to outpace public debate entirely. Had the public known that their personal data (62) _____ (REPURPOSE) at such scale, they might have demanded stronger protections. Ironically, those who built A.I. claim they are convinced (63) _____ (DO) everything right, despite growing evidence to the contrary. One researcher suggested developing more transparent algorithms, but his idea was dismissed as “bad for business.” He later reported that his managers had insisted on him retracting his findings to protect the company’s reputation. If a global consensus (64) _____ (EMERGE), it could yet curb the worst excesses, but many fear it’s too late. Some argue that, by now, A.I. has become too integral to have its reach restricted without massive economic disruption. If we (65) _____ (LET) these systems become so embedded, society might have retained more leverage. In the end, whether humanity will master this creation or be mastered by it depends on whether we can have the right rules enforced — before the next generation (66) _____ (REALIZE) that we failed to act when we could have. ♦

1. seemed 2. enables 3. had 4. was logging 5. has now nearly doubled 6. was 7. has become 8. prompting 9. don’t know 10. did not exist 11. are delivered 12. had been made 13. ask 14. to win 15. not only know 16. are starting 17. may get tricked 18. deliver 19. shouldn’t be forgotten 20. be taught 21. to even begin 22. mimics 23.

supplied 24. has grown 25. asked 26. won't share 27. has not stopped 28. being 29. responded 30. to decide 31. banned 32. are participating 33. to fail 34. would also help 35. demanding 36. would protect 37. were negotiating 38. having persuaded 39. filed 40. had appropriated 41. must have ingested 42. has been retrained 43. to pause 44. including 45. must not be delegated 46. writing 47. making 48. has been 49. reads 50. accused 51. will influence 52. to incorporate 53. has reportedly been collaborating 54. had not yet become 55. will have witnessed 56. setting up 57. put 58. circumventing 59. might have been spared 60. reporting 61. upgraded 62. would be repurposed 63. to have done 64. were to emerge / emerged 65. hadn't let 66. realizes

b) Answer the questions.

1. What does the author imply by saying that the Internet “seemed nearly animate” after the launch of multiple chatbots?
2. Why does the text compare early AI applications (like Netflix recommendations) with generative AI like ChatGPT? What deeper point is being made about our awareness of AI?
3. The author mentions that chatbots can generate content that “does not exist before.” What implications does this have for the authenticity and originality of information online?
4. What is the rhetorical effect of presenting ChatGPT’s generated song lyrics in two contrasting styles (Johnny Cash vs. Verdi)? How does this choice strengthen the author’s argument?
5. How does the phrase “stochastic parrots” connect to the broader debate about AI’s capacity for true understanding?
6. Why does the text highlight ChatGPT’s ability to pass the bar exam without studying? What does this example illustrate about human versus machine learning?
7. Why does the author bring up examples of AI “hallucinations”? What does this suggest about the reliability of AI outputs?
8. What can be inferred about the legal system’s preparedness for AI-related mistakes, based on the example of the lawyer fined for using fake citations?
9. What tension does the text reveal about the educational system’s response to AI? How do the examples of the NYC chancellor and the Texas A&M professor illustrate this?
10. The text references screenwriters and the Writers Guild strike. How does this connect with earlier concerns about creativity and AI? What larger fear does it reflect?

11. Why is the detail about the Authors Guild suing OpenAI significant in the context of intellectual property rights?
12. How does the author use the open letter signed by technologists like Musk and Wozniak to underscore the urgency of AI regulation?
13. What do the rhetorical questions in the open letter (e.g., “Should we automate away all the jobs?”) aim to provoke in the reader?
14. How does the mention of AI’s role in creating phishing emails and malware expand the reader’s understanding of AI’s risks beyond mere content generation?
15. Why does the author describe the Biden administration’s Executive Order as reading “more like a wish list than an order”? What does this imply about governmental control over AI?
16. What future scenario does the author suggest by mentioning the potential integration of AI into Samsung’s phones and a new “iPhone of AI”?
17. What does the author imply about the balance of power between private tech companies and public regulation?
18. How does the final paragraph about whistleblowers, covert upgrades, and the suppression of research tie back to the broader theme of unchecked AI expansion?
19. According to the text, what lesson can be drawn from the hypothetical statement: “Had the public known that their personal data (REPURPOSE) at such scale, they might have demanded stronger protections”?
20. The text ends by questioning whether humanity will master AI or be mastered by it. Based on the evidence given, what do you think is the author’s implicit stance — optimistic, pessimistic, or balanced? Justify your answer.

5.

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<https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/why-is-the-sea-so-hot>

Why Is the Sea So Hot?

A startling rise in sea-surface temperatures suggests that we may not understand how fast the climate is changing.

By Elizabeth Kolbert

March 15, 2024

a) Insert the correct forms of the verbs.

In early 2023, climate scientists — and anyone else (1) _____ (PAY) attention to the data — (2) _____ (START) to notice something strange. At the beginning of March, sea-surface temperatures began to rise. By April, they'd set a new record: the average temperature at the surface of the world's oceans, (3) _____ (EXCLUDE) those at the poles, was just a shade under seventy degrees. Typically, the highest sea-surface temperatures of the year (4) _____ (OBSERVE) in March, toward the end of the Southern Hemisphere's summer. Last year, temperatures remained abnormally high through the Southern Hemisphere's autumn and beyond, (5) _____ (BREAK) the monthly records for May, June, July, and other months. The North Atlantic (6) _____ (BE) particularly bathtub-like; in the words of Copernicus, an arm of the European Union's space service, temperatures in the basin were "off the charts."

Since the start of 2024, sea-surface temperatures (7) _____ (CONTINUE) to climb; in February, they set yet another record. In a warming world, ocean temperatures (8) _____ (EXPECT) to rise and keep on rising. But, for the last twelve months, the seas have been so feverish that scientists (9) _____ (START) to worry about not just the physical impacts of all that heat but the theoretical implications. Can the past year be explained by what (10) _____ (ALREADY / KNOW) about climate change, or are there forces at work that (11) _____ (NOT / ACCOUNT FOR)? And, if it's the latter, does this mean that projections of warming, already decidedly grim, are underestimating the dangers?

"We don't really know what (12) _____ (GO ON)," Gavin Schmidt, the director of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, told me. "And we haven't really known what's going on since about March of last year." He called the situation "disquieting."

Last winter, before ocean temperatures began their record run, the world was in the cool — or La Niña — phase of a climate pattern that (13) _____ (GO BY) the acronym ENSO. By summer, an El Niño — or warm phase — had begun. Since ocean temperatures started to climb before the start of El Niño, the shift, by itself, seems insufficient (14) _____ (ACCOUNT) for what’s going on. Meanwhile, the margin by which records (15) _____ (SHATTER) exceeds what’s usually seen during El Niños.

“It’s not like we’re breaking records by a little bit now and then,” Brian McNoldy, a hurricane researcher at the University of Miami, said. “It’s like the whole climate just fast-forwarded by fifty or a hundred years. That’s how strange this looks.” It (16) _____ (ESTIMATE) that in 2023 the heat content in the upper two thousand metres of the oceans increased by at least nine zettajoules. For comparison’s sake, the world’s annual energy consumption (17) _____ (AMOUNT) to about 0.6 zettajoules.

A variety of circumstances and events (18) _____ (CITE) as possible contributors to the past year’s anomalous warmth. One is the January, 2022, eruption of an underwater volcano in the South Pacific called Hunga Tonga–Hunga Ha’apai. Usually, volcanoes (19) _____ (EMIT) sulfur dioxide, which produces a temporary cooling effect, and water vapor, which does the opposite. Hunga Tonga–Hunga Ha’apai produced relatively little sulfur dioxide but a fantastic amount of water vapor, and its warming effects, it’s believed, (20) _____ (STILL / FEEL).

Another factor is the current solar cycle, known as Solar Cycle 25. Solar activity (21) _____ (RAMP UP) — it’s expected to peak this year or next — and this, too, (22) _____ (MAY / PRODUCE) an extra bit of warming.

Yet another is a change in the composition of shipping fuel. Regulations that (23) _____ (GO) into effect in 2020 reduced the amount of sulphur in the fuel (24) _____ (USE) by supertankers. This reduction, in turn, (25) _____ (LEAD) to a decline in a type of air pollution that, through direct and indirect effects, reflects sunlight back to space. It (26) _____ (THINK) that this change has led to an increase in the amount of energy being absorbed by the seas, though quantifying the effect is difficult.

Can all of these factors together account for what’s going on? Climate scientists say it’s possible. There’s also a lot of noise in the climate system. “This (27) _____

(CAN / END UP) just being natural variability,” Susan Wijffels, a senior scientist at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, said.

But, possibly, something else is going on — something that scientists haven’t yet accounted for. This spring, ENSO is expected to transition into what scientists call “neutral” conditions. If precedent holds, then when this (28) _____ (OCCUR) ocean temperatures should start to run more in line with long-term trends.

“I think the real test (29) _____ (BE) what happens in the next twelve months,” Wijffels said. “If temperatures remain very high, then I would say more people in the community (30) _____ (REALLY / ALARM) and say: ‘O.K., this is outside of what we can explain.’ ”

In 2023, which was by far the warmest year on record on land, as well as in the oceans, many countries (31) _____ (EXPERIENCE) record-breaking heat waves or record-breaking wildfires or record-breaking rainstorms or some combination of these. (Last year, in the United States, there were twenty-eight weather-related disasters that caused more than a billion dollars’ worth of damage — another record.) If the climate projections (32) _____ (BE) accurate, then the year was a preview of things (33) _____ (COME), which is scary enough. But, if the projections are missing something, that’s potentially even more terrifying, though scientists tend (34) _____ (USE) more measured terms.

“The other thing that this could all be is, we are starting to see shifts in how the system responds,” Schmidt observed. “All of these statistics that we’re talking about, they (35) _____ (TAKE) from the prior data. But nothing in the prior data looked like 2023. Does that mean that the prior data are no longer predictive because the system (36) _____ (CHANGE)? I can’t rule that out, and that would obviously be very concerning.”

If governments around the world (37) _____ (ACT) sooner, the worst impacts might have been prevented, but now experts fear that by the time meaningful measures are implemented, the damage (38) _____ (DO). Some researchers have had emergency studies (39) _____ (COMMISSION) to investigate whether geoengineering could offer a temporary reprieve, although many argue that relying on such measures (40) _____ (SHOULD/AVOID) altogether. If more countries had insisted on their leaders enforcing stricter regulations, the seas (41) _____

(WARM) at such an alarming rate. One leading climatologist suggested (42) _____ (INTRODUCE) stricter carbon taxes, while another boasted about (43) _____ (CONVINCE) several nations to adopt cleaner energy much earlier than planned. At the latest summit, an environmental minister insisted on all delegates (44) _____ (COMMIT) to immediate emission cuts, despite industrial lobbyists protesting fiercely. Meanwhile, a controversial billionaire is convinced (45) _____ (DO) everything alright, claiming he (46) _____ (NEED/NOT/INVEST) so heavily in fossil fuels, yet evidence suggests otherwise. By the time the next decade arrives, it is likely that entire coastal communities (47) _____ (FORCE) to relocate due to rising sea levels. If the international community doesn't have new carbon-capture plants built rapidly, irreversible tipping points (48) _____ (CAN/CROSS) sooner than forecast. Some critics believe that if industrial giants hadn't manipulated climate data for decades, the public (49) _____ (DEMAND) faster action long ago. Scientists also reported that several governments had secret reports prepared, which warned about these scenarios decades ago but (50) _____ (quietly/SHELVE). (51) _____ (these warnings/MAKE) public, more decisive action could have been taken. Now, countless species that once thrived in stable ocean temperatures (52) _____ (DRIVE) toward extinction. If immediate adaptation strategies (53) _____ (NOT/PUT) in place, food security worldwide may collapse within a generation. Activists insist that unless we have renewable technologies scaled up urgently, the next crisis (54) _____ (OVERSHADOW) even the worst disasters of recent years. Some leaders, however, still claim that people needn't worry so much about short-term fluctuations, despite mounting evidence to the contrary. When historians look back, they will have recorded that humanity had countless opportunities (55) _____ (CHANGE) course but squandered them through inaction and complacency. ♦

1. paying 2. started 3. excluding 4. are observed 5. breaking 6. was 7. have continued
 8. are expected 9. are starting 10. is already known 11. haven't been accounted for 12.
 is going on 13. goes by 14. to account 15. are being shattered 16. is estimated 17.
 amounts 18. have been cited 19. emit 20. are still being felt 21. is ramping up 22. may
 be producing 23. went 24. used 25. has led 26. is thought 27. could end up 28. occurs
 29. will be 30. will be really alarmed 31. experienced 32. are 33. to come 34. to use
 35. are taken 36. has changed 37. had acted 38. will have been done 39.

commissioned 40. should have been avoided 41. wouldn't be warming 42. introducing
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 will have been forced 48. could be crossed 49. would have demanded 50. were quietly
 shelved 51. had these warnings been made public 52. are being driven 53. aren't put
 54. will overshadow 55. to change

b) Answer the questions.

1. What does the phrase “off the charts” imply about the North Atlantic temperatures, and why might this be particularly worrying for climate scientists?
2. The text mentions that March is usually when the highest sea-surface temperatures are recorded. What does the fact that temperatures stayed abnormally high past March suggest about the climate system's behavior?
3. Why does the author compare the ocean's heat content increase in 2023 with the world's annual energy consumption? What effect does this comparison have?
4. Based on the text, what is the difference between El Niño and La Niña, and why is the timing of the warming significant in this context?
5. How does the reference to “the whole climate just fast-forwarded by fifty or a hundred years” help illustrate the scale of recent warming?
6. Explain how the eruption of Hunga Tonga–Hunga Ha'apai might have contributed to unusual warming instead of cooling, which is more typical of volcanic eruptions.
7. Why is the change in shipping fuel regulation included in the discussion of rising ocean temperatures? What does this imply about unintended consequences of environmental policies?
8. What does Susan Wijffels mean by saying “this could just be natural variability”? How does this contrast with other scientists' views in the text?
9. What role does the ENSO cycle play in scientists' understanding of the recent ocean warming trends?
10. Why does the text say that the coming twelve months will be a “real test” for climate scientists' theories?
11. Why might it be more concerning if the record temperatures cannot be explained by known climate patterns and events?

12. According to Schmidt, why could prior climate data be losing predictive power?
What does this imply for future climate models?
13. What is the significance of comparing the projected impacts of climate change with the possibility that these projections may be underestimations?
14. Why does the author mention geoengineering as a possible emergency measure, and why do many experts think it should be avoided?
15. Explain the conditional statement: “If more countries had insisted on their leaders enforcing stricter regulations, the seas wouldn’t have warmed at such an alarming rate.” What does this reveal about the perceived role of policy?
16. What does the text imply about the link between industrial interests, manipulated data, and public awareness?
17. How does the hypothetical scenario about coastal communities being forced to relocate connect to broader concerns about climate adaptation?
18. What can be inferred about the attitude of the “controversial billionaire,” and how does the text use this to illustrate larger societal issues?
19. Why does the text close with the idea that historians will record humanity’s “squandered opportunities”? What effect does this have on the reader?
20. In your view, does the author believe that tipping points can still be avoided? Use evidence from the text to justify your answer.

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<https://www.newyorker.com/news/the-political-scene/how-joe-biden-handed-the-presidency-to-donald-trump>

How Joe Biden Handed the Presidency to Donald Trump
At a fateful event last summer, Barack Obama, George Clooney, and others were stunned by Biden’s weakness and confusion. Why did he and his advisers decide to conceal his condition from the public and campaign for re-election?

By Jake Tapper and Alex Thompson

May 13, 2025

President Joe Biden (1)_____ (GET) out of bed the day after the 2024 election convinced that he (2)_____ (WRONG). The élites, the Democratic officials, the media, Nancy Pelosi, Barack Obama—they (3)_____ (SHOULD/PUSH) him out of the race. If he (4)_____ (STAY) in, he would have beaten Donald Trump. That’s what the polls suggested, he (5)_____ (SAY) again and again.

His pollsters told us that no such polls (6)_____ (EXIST). There was no credible data, they said, (7)_____ (SUPPORT) the notion that he (8)_____ (WIN). All unspun information suggested it would have been a loss, likely a spectacular one, far worse than that (9)_____ (SUFFER) by his replacement as the Democratic nominee, Vice-President Kamala Harris.

The disconnect between Biden’s optimism and the unhappy reality of poll results was a constant throughout his Administration. Many insiders sensed that his inner circle (10)_____ (SHIELD) him from bad news. It’s also true that, for Biden to absorb those poll results, he (11)_____ (HAVE TO) face the biggest issue driving them: the public (12)_____ (CONCLUDE) — long before most Democratic officials, media, and other “élites” had—that he was far too old to do the job. “We got so screwed by Biden, as a party,” David Plouffe, who helped run the Harris campaign, told us. Plouffe (13)_____ (SERVE) as Senator Barack Obama’s Presidential campaign manager in 2008 and as a senior adviser to President Obama before largely (14)_____ (RETIRE) from politics in 2013. After Biden

(15)_____ (DROP OUT) of the race, on July 21, 2024, Plouffe was drafted to help Harris in what he saw as a “rescue mission.” Harris, he said, was a “great soldier,” but the compressed hundred-and-seven-day race was “a nightmare.”

The real issue wasn’t his age, per se. It was the clear limitations of his abilities, which got worse throughout his Presidency. What the public saw of his functioning was concerning. What (16)_____ (GO ON) in private was worse. While Biden on a day-in, day-out basis could certainly make decisions and assert wisdom and act as President, there were several significant issues that complicated his Presidency: a limit to the hours in which he (17)_____ (CAN/FUNCTION) reliably and an increasing number of moments when he seemed (18)_____ (FREEZE UP), lose his train of thought, forget the names of top aides, or momentarily not remember friends he (19)_____ (KNOW) for decades. Not to mention impairments to his ability to communicate—ones unrelated to his lifelong stutter.

It wasn’t a straight line of decline; he had good days and bad. But, until the last day of his Presidency, Biden and those closest to him refused (20)_____ (ADMIT) the reality that his energy, cognitive skills, and communication capacity (21)_____ (FALTER) considerably. Even worse, through various means, they tried to hide it. And then came the June 27th debate against Trump, when Biden’s decline (22)_____ (LAY) bare before the world. As a result, Democrats stumbled into the fall of 2024 with an untested nominee and growing public mistrust of a White House that (23)_____ (GASLIGHT) the American people.

“It was an abomination,” one prominent Democratic strategist—who publicly defended Biden—told us. “He stole an election from the Democratic Party. He stole it from the American people.” Biden had framed his entire Presidency as a pitched battle to prevent Trump from (24)_____ (RETURN) to the Oval Office. By not (25)_____ (RELINQUISH) power and (26)_____ (REFUSE) to be honest with himself and the country about his decline, he guaranteed it.

George Clooney first met Joe Biden, the top Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in New York City after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, but their first meaningful conversation came after the actor became a credible voice (27)_____ (ADVOCATE) against the genocide in Darfur.

Fresh off winning the Best Supporting Actor Oscar for “Syriana,” in 2006, Clooney began reading reports that government-aligned forces under Sudan’s President, Omar al-Bashir, (28)_____ (KILL) innocent civilians in the Darfur region of the country. It felt like a calling. He (29)_____ (SEEK) to travel there with a national TV network, but conditions grew so dangerous that the journalists dropped out. George and his father, Nick, a former TV anchorman who was then seventy-two, flew to southern Sudan in April, 2006, and sneaked into Darfur with a camera crew. After (30)_____ (BATTLE) nine days of brutal heat, zero security, and rough nights in mud huts, the Clooneys returned to the U.S. in time for a rally (31)_____ (ORGANIZE) by the Save Darfur Coalition on the National Mall, where other speakers included then Senator Barack Obama. A few months later, Clooney testified before the U.N. Security Council, and the next year the Clooneys released their documentary, “A Journey to Darfur.” He (32)_____ (SKIP) the Oscars in 2009 to meet with President Obama and Vice-President Biden, (33)_____ (DELIVER) two hundred and fifty thousand signed Save Darfur postcards to them and pushing for a full-time envoy to the region.

By the time the 2024 Presidential race began, the actor (34)_____ (KNOW) Biden for decades and had known him well for fifteen years. He had last seen Biden on December 4, 2022, when Clooney was in D.C. with his wife, Amal, (35)_____ (CELEBRATE) at the Kennedy Center Honors. Biden looked older, sure, but in the East Room of the White House, at the reception for the honorees, the President was playful and seemed cogent enough.

“We see Amal Clooney’s husband,” the President said, to laughter.

Yes, he (36)_____ (READ) from prepared remarks, but far be it from an actor to take issue with someone reciting lines.

“Mentors—he mentors these—those historic kids from Parkland on their march and their lives—against gun violence,” Biden said, stumbling a bit. “I met with every one of those kids, and they really appreciate what you did, George. Not a joke.”

In February, 2024, Clooney had thought the special counsel Robert Hur’s report, which called Biden an “elderly man with a poor memory,” mean-spirited. And, when Biden gave a rousing State of the Union address in March, Clooney thought, *Way to go, Mr. President.*

He had helped him (37)_____ (ELECT) in 2020 and was happy to do so again.

For the rematch in 2024, everyone involved with the campaign knew that beating Trump (38)_____ (BE) difficult—and (39)_____ (REQUIRE) a record-breaking amount of money. The Hollywood mogul Jeffrey Katzenberg led the charge on that front. He (40)_____ (HELP) the Democratic Party with resources—money and connections—since the early eighties, when he was an executive at Paramount Pictures and a student of the leadership of the legendary businessman Lew Wasserman. He'd backed some members of Congress, but Katzenberg's first real foray into the world of big-donor politics came when he and David Geffen flew to Arkansas, in 1990, to meet a young governor named Bill Clinton. Since then, Katzenberg (41)_____ (BECOME) a top fund-raiser for Democratic Presidential candidates.

Katzenberg had known Biden since the late nineteen-eighties and was on board with his Presidential run as early as October, 2018, when he hosted a meet and greet for the former Vice-President at his Wilshire office, after which the two men dined at Madeo, in West Hollywood. Katzenberg told him that he (42)_____ (SUPPORT) Biden's campaign, that he thought him best positioned to beat Trump. I don't want anything from you, he told Biden. I might be the only one who doesn't. I just want you (43)_____ (WIN).

Biden did, in 2020, and in the process Katzenberg became more than a donor. As 2024 approached, he saw Biden's communication struggles and thought he (44)_____ (CAN/HELP) fix them. He worked on providing better lighting for Biden and trying to find a microphone that would amplify Biden when he would break into a whisper for emphasis. Katzenberg also recruited his friend Steven Spielberg, who helped coach Biden for the State of the Union and his debates, even (45)_____ (ASSIST) with routine campaign videos. There was, however, only so much that Hollywood magic could do.

Katzenberg and Clooney were pals, and they had a long, successful track record of doing these events: they had broken records for Obama with a nearly fifteen-million-dollar event at Clooney's Studio City home, in May, 2012; organized two events for Hillary

Clinton, in 2016; and raked in more than seven million dollars with a July, 2020, Zoom fund-raiser in which Obama stumped for Biden.

On a rainy Easter at his home in the South of France, on the last day of March in 2024, Clooney heard from Katzenberg, who made his ask—a fund-raiser in June. Katzenberg had learned over the years that there (46)_____ (BE) a cadence in terms of how many times a campaign could ask people for money. He thought that the Biden team could get another bite at the apple in the summer and then one last one on the other side of Labor Day. But Clooney (47)_____ (BE) in London and Tuscany in June, (48)_____ (WORK) with the filmmaker Noah Baumbach on “Jay Kelly,” a coming-of-age film that Baumbach had co-written with Emily Mortimer. It was a big project for Netflix, involving Clooney, Adam Sandler, and Laura Dern.

Clooney looked at his calendar. There was one possible window: Saturday, June 15th. It would be brutal, though. He’d need to fly into Los Angeles from Tuscany, do the event, and leave that same night for Rome, before the fund-raiser was even over.

“I can do one night,” Clooney told Katzenberg.

“Great,” Katzenberg said.

“Let’s call Julia and see if she (49)_____ (DO) it with me,” Clooney said, referring to Julia Roberts.

He texted her immediately. Katzenberg had headed Disney when Roberts was cast in the role that made her a superstar, in “Pretty Woman.” He reached out to her, too.

Coordinating it all was wildly complicated. Roberts (50)_____ (START) production on a film—“After the Hunt,” with Ayo Edebiri, Andrew Garfield, and Chloë Sevigny—and also needed to get on a plane before the fund-raiser ended.

Not to mention the President’s schedule. From June 13th to 14th, Biden was going to be in Italy for the G-7, right after honoring Allied veterans in France for the eightieth anniversary of D Day, in between which he’d be at his home in Wilmington, Delaware, while his son Hunter (51)_____ (FACE) prosecution for a gun charge. They looked at six different ways to move things around, but everyone ultimately agreed on June 15th. Jimmy Kimmel would interview Biden and Barack Obama onstage. All Clooney and Roberts needed to do was (52)_____ (POSE) for photos with the big donors before the event, then open the show. Afterward, they could fly to their sets, and, God willing, another fund-raising record (53)_____ (SET).

On Thursday, June 13th, Clooney landed at a private airfield in the Los Angeles area. On Saturday, he rolled to the Peacock Theatre, capacity seven thousand one hundred, roughly four hours before the event was set to begin; he and Roberts had hundreds of photographs to take with thousands of attendees, whose perks depended upon their contributions, from two hundred and fifty dollars to five hundred thousand dollars. The event would once again set a record as the biggest fund-raiser for a Democrat in American political history, raising more than thirty million dollars.

Before Kimmel, Obama, and Biden hit the stage to toss *bons mots* back and forth in a cozy Q. & A., there was a series of private receptions, called *clutches*, plus photo lines and free-flowing booze and *hors d'œuvres*. Clooney and Roberts were doing the work of charming the attendees and posing for pictures when they heard the crowd (54)_____ (START) to murmur. Clooney looked to the side and saw Obama walking in, grayer but still spry and electric. A few minutes later, Secret Service agents entered the room and announced that President Biden (55)_____ (ARRIVE).

Biden hobbled out from around the corner. Clooney knew that the President had just arrived from the G-7 leaders' summit in Apulia, Italy, that morning and might be tired, but, *holy shit*, he (56)_____ (NOT/EXPECT) this.

The President appeared severely diminished, as if he'd aged a decade since Clooney last saw him, in December, 2022. He was taking tiny steps, and an aide seemed (57)_____ (GUIDE) him by the arm.

"Thank you for being here," the President said to guests as he (58)_____ (SHUFFLE) past them. "Thank you for being here." Clooney felt a knot form in his stomach as the President approached him. Biden looked at him. "Thank you for being here," he said. "Thank you for being here."

"You know George," the assisting aide told the President, gently reminding him who was in front of him. "Yeah, yeah," the President said to one of the most recognizable men in the world, the host of this lucrative fund-raiser. "Thank you for being here."

"Hi, Mr. President," Clooney said.

"How are ya?" the President replied.

"How was your trip?" Clooney asked.

"It was fine," the President said.

It seemed clear that the President (59)_____ (NOT/RECOGNIZE) Clooney.

“George *Clooney*,” the aide clarified for the President.

“Oh, yeah!” Biden said. “Hi, George!”

Clooney (60)_____ (SHAKE) to his core. The President hadn’t recognized him, a man he had known for years. Clooney had expressed concern about Biden’s health before—a White House aide had told him a few months before that they were working on (61)_____ (GET) the President to take longer steps when he walked—but obviously the problem went far beyond his gait. This was much graver.

This was the President of the United States?

Obama decided that the fault (62)_____ (LIE) with Biden’s busy schedule.

The man was eighty-one, and he had gone from France, to Delaware, then Italy, and then to California in just ten days. The time zones were difficult enough, but this was a rough itinerary. Obama put it down to a bad scheduling decision by Biden and his staff.

As Obama’s former chief speechwriter Jon Favreau and his wife, had had two personal meetings with Biden in the previous two years, and two wildly divergent experiences.

The first was on November 30, 2022, when he, Emily, their son Charlie, and Emily’s parents, Marnie and Tim Black, visited the White House. Favreau, now one of the hosts of the political podcast “Pod Save America,” first had to record an interview with Biden’s chief of staff, Ron Klain, and when he joined his family in his old office, he (63)_____ (DELIGHT) to find Biden there charming them all. Stunningly, Biden had recognized Marnie from an event in California several years before and said so as he regaled them with stories infused by his garrulous Irish pol demeanor. The President invited everyone up to the Oval Office, where he was as sharp as ever.

The second encounter came a year and a half later, on Friday night, April 26, 2024, the evening before the White House Correspondents’ Association dinner. Favreau was among the “influencers” invited to visit with the President at the White House, as were two of his co-hosts, Dan Pfeiffer and Jon Lovett.

That night, to Favreau, Biden seemed (64)_____ (AGE) fifty years in sixteen months. He was incoherent. His stories were meandering and confusing. Something about Iraq? What, exactly, was the point of this? He told one story twice. After the President left the group, Favreau asked a staffer about his demeanor. Oh, no big deal, the

staffer said. The President (65)_____ (MUST/BE) tired. It was nighttime at the end of a long week.

Biden seemed O.K. the next night at the dinner, capably reading from a teleprompter and projecting as aged but present. But Lovett, Pfeiffer, Favreau, and Emily left the White House that weekend deeply disturbed. And now here they were at the biggest fund-raiser in the history of the Democratic Party. Yes, Biden (66)_____ (HELP) by the presence of the younger, more charismatic Obama and Kimmel onstage with him. But they could only hide so much.

And then came the event: Jimmy Kimmel, fifty-six; Barack Obama, sixty-two; and Joe Biden, eighty-one, came onstage, all in dark suits, white shirts, no ties. Kimmel sat on the left, Biden in the middle, Obama on the right. The late-night comedian rattled off Biden's accomplishments and quipped, "Not bad for 'Sleepy Joe,' " (67) _____ (RECLAIM) Trump's nickname for the President.

Some attendees later expressed concern about how Biden seemed onstage. The event was just half an hour or so, and the questions were friendly. Many in the audience (68)_____ (SURPRISE) by the President's apparent diminishment, his quiet and frail presentation, his inability (69) _____ (DEVELOP) a strong, convincing sales pitch. Some of his answers were downright confusing.

When the event ended, the three men stood. Obama began to walk offstage, but Biden walked to the edge and, after (70) _____ (WAVE) and (71) _____ (GIVE) a thumbs up, stopped and stared blankly into the crowd. Obama turned back and (72)_____ (GRAB) Biden's arm, then guided him backstage. He later explained that he just wanted to get the hell out of there, but he didn't want to leave Biden alone up on the stage. Biden folks insisted that the President (73) _____ (only/BASK) in the glow of a supportive audience, and they called clips of the moment "cheap fakes," a term for video content that (74)_____ (EDIT) or deceptively taken out of context. But even some supporters present in the arena wondered what (75)_____ (GO ON).

He doesn't look like he (76)_____ (KNOW) *where he's supposed to go*, thought the New Hampshire Democratic congresswoman Annie Kuster, sitting in the audience with the California congresswoman Julia Brownley. They (77) _____ (SEE) him in the photo line, and Kuster could tell it was a struggle for

the President to engage. It reminded her of being with an aging grandparent, worryingly thinking, *Oh, my gosh, what* (78) _____ (HAPPEN) *next?*

In the audience, Emily Favreau couldn't believe how awful Biden (79) _____ (SEEM). "I wanted to make everyone stay in this theatre and say, 'No one is going anywhere until we (80) _____ (HAVE) a plan, because this can't be it,' " Emily, a longtime communications consultant, said. To her, it had been a complete disaster. And she hadn't even seen what happened backstage.

Kuster had already reached the conclusion that there was no scenario in which Biden (81) _____ (RE-ELECT). She turned to Brownley. "We can't go out there and campaign for 'four more years,' " she said. "That's just not tenable."

That same night, in New York City, the Senate Majority Leader, Chuck Schumer, was at a wedding. He had jitters about the upcoming debate.

Sometimes the President would call him and, after some chit chat, admit that he'd forgotten why he (82) _____ (CALL). Sometimes he rambled. Sometimes he forgot names. Schumer wasn't concerned about Biden's acuity, but he was worried about the optics. Biden talked sluggishly—his voice was not just slower but oddly quieter, reminding Schumer of his mother, who had Parkinson's. His gait was slower. Schumer was concerned about the President's electability. He talked about it with his staff, but he felt that he had to keep a close circle. If he (83) _____ (TALK) about his worries with Obama or Hakeem Jeffries or Nancy Pelosi and it got out that they (84) _____ (DISCUSS) whether Biden was too old to run, that would make it even harder for him to win.

At the wedding, Schumer was discussing his concerns and the fact that the debate was so early—just twelve days away. "If things go south at the debate, it might change things," Schumer later recalled (85) _____ (SAY). The early date gave Democrats some time.

Another wedding guest, who sat at Schumer's table, recalled him (86) _____ (SAY), "If things go south at the debate, me, Barack, Nancy, and Hakeem have a Plan B," though Schumer would later deny it.

George Clooney had flown back to Italy and compartmentalized his encounter with the President at the L.A. fund-raiser, chalking it up to the President's eighty-one spins around

the sun and Biden's own long trip from Italy, even if the President had flown in on Air Force One.

But then the debate confirmed all the fears that he (87) _____ (SHOVE) aside. Biden struggled (88) _____ (FIND) the words he needed to communicate. He made guttural sounds. His slack-jawed expressions suggested that he wasn't even aware that he was on camera for the entire ninety minutes. "Look," he said at one point, and then trailed off, before concluding, "We finally beat Medicare."

Senator Joe Manchin reached Clooney through a mutual acquaintance. He felt that Biden, his friend of decades, (89) _____ (LOSE) the will to fight. He told Clooney that a number of Democratic senators he'd spoken to (90) _____ (PLAN) to confront Biden, to try to convince him to step aside. Manchin personally hoped that they wouldn't until after the NATO summit that month — "No need to show our ass to the world," he said. For whatever reason, no such meeting happened. Clooney held out hope that Democratic governors would address the matter with Biden instead. But the readout he got on a White House meeting with the governors suggested that no one had stepped up and told the President the truth. Then, on July 8th, Biden released a letter as a last-ditch effort to end the crusade to push him out.

The letter shocked Clooney. Despite the herculean efforts that the Democratic machine had made to shut down any sort of real contest, Biden cast his position as that of a true exercise in democracy, having "received over 14 million votes, 87% of the votes cast across the entire nominating process."

"This was a process open to anyone who wanted to run," he wrote, which was not really true. "Only three people chose to challenge me." Of Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., Biden wrote that he "fared so badly that he left the primaries to run as an independent." Of Dean Phillips, a Democratic congressman from Minnesota, the President said that he "attacked me for being too old and was soundly defeated. The voters of the Democratic Party (91) _____ (VOTE). They (92) _____ (CHOOSE) me to be the nominee of the party."

This was too much for Clooney. He reached out to Obama to tell him that he was considering writing an op-ed to call for Biden to drop out. Obama advised that doing so would only make Biden dig in deeper.

In his home office in the South of France, Clooney sat down at his laptop. “I love Joe Biden,” Clooney wrote. “As a senator. As a vice president and as president. I consider him a friend, and I believe in him. Believe in his character. Believe in his morals. In the last four years, he (93) _____ (WIN) many of the battles he’s faced.”

But, Clooney added, “the one battle he cannot win is the fight against time. None of us can. It’s devastating to say it, but the Joe Biden I was with three weeks ago at the fundraiser was not the Joe ‘big F-ing deal’ Biden of 2010. He wasn’t even the Joe Biden of 2020. He was the same man we all witnessed at the debate.”

Clooney got down to the point: “We are not going to win in November with this president . . . This is the opinion of every senator and Congress member and governor who I (94) _____ (SPEAK) with in private. Every single one, irrespective of what he or she is saying publicly.”

He wanted some sort of process for a new nominee. “Let’s hear from Wes Moore and Kamala Harris and Gretchen Whitmer and Gavin Newsom and Andy Beshear and J.B. Pritzker and others. Let’s agree that the candidates not attack one another but, in the short time we have, focus on what (95) _____ (MAKE) this country soar. Then we (96) _____ (CAN/GO) into the Democratic convention next month and figure it out.” He attempted to end the op-ed with a note that was both empathetic and firm: “Joe Biden is a hero; he saved democracy in 2020. We need him to do it again in 2024.”

Clooney sent a copy to Jeffrey Katzenberg and told him to show one of Biden’s closest advisers, Steve Ricchetti.

Ricchetti read it and was furious. Internally, he threatened (97) _____ (SHUT) Clooney down—some of his colleagues thought he sounded like a Mob boss. Word came back that Ricchetti suggested it would be better if Clooney (98) _____ (HOLD) it a week.

Katzenberg did not agree with Clooney’s assessment. Biden (99) _____ (JET-LAG), and Katzenberg had been told that the President didn’t sleep well on flights, even in the bedroom aboard Air Force One. So the President had got only four or five hours of sleep. Biden was one of those people who needed the full eight hours every night. Even just seven hours (100) _____ (NOT/CUT) it.

Katzenberg, who had the final draft (101) _____ (PROOFREAD) and (102) _____ (POLISH) by a trusted aide, insisted on Clooney (103) _____ (HAVE) the message rewritten if he still intended to release it. He boasted about (104) _____ (HANDLE) far trickier situations before, and he suggested (105) _____ (DELAY) the announcement until tempers cooled down. If Clooney had waited another week, the backlash (106) _____ (MIGHT/AVOID) altogether, but now he was convinced (107) _____ (DO) everything alright, despite the chaos. Some insiders whispered that if Biden (108) _____ (GIVE) a proper chance to rest, he would have addressed the issue himself before it escalated. By next month, they believe Clooney will have realized the consequences of pushing too hard too soon. Ricchetti, still furious, warned that certain donors might have been persuaded to withdraw their support if Clooney kept (109) _____ (STIR) the pot. He told Katzenberg that Clooney (110) _____ (NEED/NOT/PROVOKE) such a reaction over what could have been handled discreetly. Meanwhile, Clooney's allies threatened that they wouldn't hesitate to go public if Ricchetti tried to retaliate. (111) _____ (Ricchetti/BE) less hot-headed, he might have avoided fueling Clooney's determination. Rumor has it that the President himself insisted on his team (112) _____ (KEEP) a tighter leash on celebrity surrogates in the future. If Biden should win a second term, it will partly be because his circle had the situation contained before it did lasting damage. Some staffers quietly admitted they (113) _____ (PREFER) Clooney to stay silent, but once he had spoken up, there was no turning back.

Clooney (114) _____ (currently/STAR), on Broadway, in "Good Night, and Good Luck," a celebration of the CBS correspondent Edward R. Murrow in particular and journalism in general, based in part on the 2005 film of the same name. Both the film and the play were written by Clooney and his longtime collaborator Grant Heslov.

The play (115) _____ (FOCUS) on Murrow's reporting on the campaign by the Republican senator Joseph McCarthy, of Wisconsin, (116) _____ (SMEAR) various Americans with charges of Communism and disloyalty. Despite the obvious resonance with current headlines, the drama remains firmly planted in the nineteen-fifties, except for one moment at the very end. Clooney delivers some of Murrow's famed 1958 speech "Wires and Lights in a Box," warning that television "can

teach, it can illuminate; yes, and even it can inspire. But it can do so only to the extent that humans (117) _____ (DETERMINE) to use it to those ends.”

What follows is a montage of television clips suggesting the medium’s evolution—or devolution—since Murrow gave that speech, from the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, to the carnival of humanity of “The Jerry Springer Show,” to recent ignominious moments from cable TV, including conservatives spreading conspiracy theories about the 2020 election and Democrats vouching for President Biden’s acuity.

Asked about the fund-raiser and what followed, a Biden spokesperson said, “To the present day, no one (118) _____ (BE) able to point out where Joe Biden had to make a presidential decision or make a presidential address where he was unable to do his job because of mental decline. In fact, the evidence points to the opposite—he was a very effective president. Evidence of aging is not evidence of mental incapacity.” But at the Winter Garden Theatre one breezy April afternoon, Clooney said it was important to him and his team to include what he saw as misleading testimonials about Biden. “We had to do it,” he said, to underline the importance of speaking truth to power no matter which party currently rules.

Also, he acknowledged, lies serve as an important reminder for anyone in the audience upset about the current state of affairs. Democrats deceived the country about Biden’s abilities and, Clooney said, “that’s how Trump won.” ♦

1. got 2. had been wronged 3. shouldn't have pushed him 4. had stayed 5. would say
6. existed 7. to support 8. would have won 9. suffered 10. shielded 11. would have
had to 12. had concluded 13. had served 14. retiring 15. (had) dropped out 16. was
going on 17. could function 18. to freeze up 19. had known 20. to admit 21. had
faltered 22. was laid 23. had been gaslighting 24. returning 25. relinquishing 26.
refusing 27. advocating 28. were killing 29. sought 30. battling 31. organized 32.
skipped 33. delivering 34. had known 35. to be celebrated 36. was reading 37. get
elected 38. would be 39. would require 40. had been helping 41. had become 42.
would support 43. to win 44. could help 45. assisting 46. was 47. was going to be 48.
working 49. will do 50. was starting 51. faced 52. pose 53. would be set 54. starting
55. had arrived 56. was not expecting 57. to be guiding 58. shuffled 59. had not
recognized 60. was shaken 61. getting 62. lay 63. was delighted 64. to have aged 65.
must have been 66. would be helped 67. reclaiming 68. were surprised 69. to develop
70. waving 71. giving 72. grabbed 73. was only basking 74. has been edited 75. was
going on 76. knows 77. had seen 78. is going to happen 79. seemed 80. have 81.
would be re-elected 82. had called 83. talked 84. were discussing 85. having said 86.

saying 87. had shoved 88. to find 89. had lost 90. were planning 91. have voted 92. have chosen 93. has won 94. have spoken 95. will make 96. could go 97. to shut 98. held 99. had been jet-lagged 100. wouldn't cut 101. proofread 102. polished 103. having 104. having handled 105. delaying 106. might have been avoided 107. to have done 108. had been given 109. stirring 110. needn't have provoked 111. had Richetti been 112. keeping 113. would have preferred 114. is currently starring 115. focuses 116. to smear 117. are determined 118. has been able

b) Answer the questions.

1. What does the text suggest about the role of Biden's close advisers in shaping his understanding of his own electability? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
2. Why might David Plouffe describe Harris's campaign as a "rescue mission"? How does this phrase reflect the broader consequences of Biden's decision to stay in the race?
3. The text mentions that Biden "framed his entire Presidency as a pitched battle to prevent Trump from returning to the Oval Office." How does the outcome described contradict this goal?
4. Based on the text, how does Biden's situation compare to broader issues in democratic systems when leaders are shielded from criticism or inconvenient facts? Give a relevant historical or contemporary example if possible.
5. Analyse the statement: "*He stole an election from the Democratic Party. He stole it from the American people.*" — In what sense could this claim be justified or challenged, based on information in the text?
6. If you were advising Biden's team before the 2024 election, what alternative actions could have avoided the scenario described? Explain how these actions might have changed the outcome.
7. The text suggests a clear connection between Biden's refusal to step aside and the Democrats entering the fall of 2024 with an "untested nominee." Explain this chain of events and its impact.
8. How does the anecdote about George Clooney's activism relate thematically to the main narrative about Biden's leadership? Identify at least one parallel or contrast.

9. The text mentions that Biden's limitations were partly hidden. How does this compare to other historical cases where a leader's health or capacity was concealed from the public? What are the risks?
10. Was it ethically justifiable for Biden's inner circle to "shield him from bad news" and try to hide his decline? Discuss your answer with reference to democratic accountability and voter rights.
11. Why does the author emphasize Clooney's shock when Biden fails to recognize him? What does this moment reveal about the true extent of Biden's decline, and how does it connect to the broader narrative of the campaign?
12. Considering Clooney's reaction and previous trust in Biden, how does this moment challenge Clooney's earlier support? Do you think his earlier defense of Biden against the "poor memory" claim was justified in hindsight?
13. How did the scheduling constraints and international obligations (like the G-7 summit and D-Day commemoration) contribute to the public display of Biden's physical and cognitive struggles? Explain the link.
14. How does the text illustrate the tension between celebrity influence (Clooney, Roberts, Katzenberg) and political reality? To what extent can "Hollywood magic" realistically compensate for a candidate's visible decline?
15. The text describes how Katzenberg and Spielberg tried to "fix" Biden's communication issues with lighting and microphones. What does this suggest about the limits of presentation versus substance in modern political campaigns?
16. Should Clooney and Katzenberg have insisted on publicly addressing Biden's health earlier? Why or why not? Discuss this in the context of democratic transparency and voter trust.
17. Compare the atmosphere at the June 15th fundraiser with the earlier events for Obama and Clinton described in the text. What does this contrast tell you about the evolution of Democratic fundraising culture and its reliance on star power?
18. Why do you think the organizers, despite knowing Biden's schedule and visible frailty, still pushed for him to appear in person at such a high-profile event? What were the risks and potential benefits?

19. Imagine you were a major donor attending this fundraiser. How might witnessing Biden's condition firsthand have changed your perspective on the viability of his campaign? What might you have done next?
20. The text shows a clash between loyalty and realism. How do Clooney's final observations about Biden's condition highlight this conflict? What does this suggest about the cost of ignoring inconvenient truths in politics?
21. The text suggests multiple explanations for Biden's visible decline — jet lag, old age, overwork, bad scheduling. How do these explanations function rhetorically in the narrative? Are they mitigating factors or do they deepen the reader's concern? Explain your reasoning with examples from the text.
22. Analyze the contrast between Favreau's two encounters with Biden. What does this contrast reveal about the reliability of personal impressions in assessing a political leader's fitness for office?
23. What role does George Clooney play in the unfolding events? In your view, does Clooney act more as a concerned citizen, a political insider, or a celebrity wielding influence? Support your answer with textual evidence.
24. Obama's action of guiding Biden off the stage is described in two ways: as an act of care and as damage control. How does this ambiguity shape the reader's perception of Obama's loyalty and political instincts?
25. The text implies that many Democratic insiders privately doubted Biden's viability but did not speak out publicly. What does this suggest about the tension between political loyalty and truth-telling in democratic leadership?
26. Consider the final section describing Clooney's play about Edward R. Murrow. Why does the author include this detail? How does it deepen the reader's understanding of Clooney's motives and the broader theme of media responsibility?
27. Identify and discuss the use of irony in Clooney's call for "a true exercise in democracy" contrasted with Biden's statement about having already won "87% of the votes cast." How does this tension illuminate the dilemma facing the Democratic Party?

28. The text frequently contrasts private conversations (Schumer, Manchin, Clooney) with public statements and appearances. What does this tension reveal about the role of backstage politics in shaping the public image of leaders?
29. How does the recurring metaphor of aging (e.g., Biden “aged fifty years in sixteen months”) function in the text? Does it evoke sympathy, alarm, or both? What does it say about society’s expectations for leaders?
30. In the final lines, Clooney argues that Democrats’ deception about Biden’s abilities is partly why “Trump won.” Critically assess this claim in the context of the text. Do you find this argument convincing? Why or why not?

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