



Annual Examinations for Middle Schools 2023

YEAR 8

ENGLISH
SOURCE BOOKLET

In this booklet, you will find the texts which you need to read to be able to answer the reading comprehension and literature questions in the Main Paper.

SOURCE A

← → ↺  <https://www.homewatch.com/a-return-to-old-hobbies/>

SPORT

TV & SHOWBIZ

LEISURE

HOUSEWORK

A Return to Old Hobbies

As our lives altered in the spring of 2020 because of the global pandemic, people turned to ...baking bread. Yes, and this wasn't the only pastime to make a comeback. People had to find different things to do while at home, instead of socialising, dining out and travelling.

- 5 Social media and the Internet made coping with lockdown easier for most of us. However, people also realised that too much screen time wasn't such a good idea and lounging on the couch all day could become quite boring. So, many started looking for creative ways to pass the time and get away from technology. As a result, several classic hobbies made a comeback and what was considered old is now new again.
- 10 Before the pandemic, it felt like no one had time for any hobbies. Some were too busy with work while others were inundated with schoolwork. Furthermore, overpacked daily schedules with day-to-day chores also made **us** forget about the numerous benefits of leisure activity. Such benefits include improving one's mood and work performance, reducing stress and best of all they are enjoyable.
- 15 Besides, during the pandemic, many hobbies provided us with an escape route from the grim news headlines. So, let's have a look at some of the activities that people returned to as they tried to get used to a new normal.

A:

- Apart from toilet paper, there were two grocery items that were almost impossible to find during lockdown: yeast and flour. But why did bread-making become a trendy
- 20 quarantine pastime? Making bread can actually be comforting as **it** engages all the senses. Bakers feel the texture of the dough, watch it change shape while it bakes and enjoy the smell as it fills the house with a delicious aroma. Finally, there is the freshly-baked taste. How can you resist that? Cooking with children was routinely

25 suggested in the media as both a learning aid and a distraction. Learning to cook at a young age can set up your children with good dietary patterns for adulthood. This activity can help in children's confidence, responsibility and independence and enable children to make appropriate food choices as they continue to grow.

B.

30 People usually associate knitting with being an elderly woman's activity, but the knitting bug has bitten people of all ages during lockdown. Not everyone is able to sew or knit but **those** who can, usually find this activity quite relaxing. The best part is that you can enjoy the physical results of your sewing or knitting project for years to come, be it in the form of a cosy scarf or a beautifully decorated pillow.

C.

35 The art of Origami has an interesting history and it began in Japan as an art form practised by the upper class. With time, the art spread throughout the world, and became a very popular artistic hobby. Folding paper into beautiful creations like animals or flowers, can be a great stress reliever. Origami is believed to be a great distractor and hence a good way to forget about your day-to-day issues, as the craft does require your undivided attention and the ability to follow the folding instructions step by step. It also works different parts of the brain! Origami is fun to create, pretty
40 to look at, and surprisingly beneficial to your health! Best of all, origami doesn't involve stressing about investing in any extra equipment, so anyone can start doing it, if they wish.

D.

45 Lockdown was the perfect time to wipe off the dust and start solving the jigsaw puzzle **that** was shelved for the days when you would have plenty of time. It's an excellent activity to do on your own or with your family. Jigsaw puzzles require a lot of concentration, attention to detail, and imagination. These puzzles give your brain a workout and can also distract you from outside stress. Fun fact: quarantine created such a high demand for puzzles that they were out of stock in many shops for months! Playing board games and card games also regained their popularity. They too are an
50 excellent way to stimulate your brain and connect with others, while playing as a team or competing one-to-one. Board and card games used to be the way for a family to unwind at weekends before the age of the Internet and computer games, and thanks to the pandemic lockdown they have made a real comeback.

55 The pandemic taught us that there are many old hobbies we can enjoy in the comfort of our own home and how important it is to include them in our daily lives. Also, there are other pandemic-safe activities that are just as helpful, such as, gardening, spending time outdoors or playing a musical instrument to name a few. And of course, anything that increases physical activity, such as walking and exercising, has the added bonus of being beneficial for physical health as well as brain health. Finally,
60 Jeanine Parisi, a scientist at John's Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, in Baltimore USA explains that, "a good hobby is something that exists in the perfect balance of being not so easy that it's not engaging, but not so challenging that you get disheartened!"

Adapted from: <https://www.ba-bamail.com/tips-life-hacks-and-diy/10-nostalgic-hobbies-revived-during-quarantine/>

Source B

← → ↻ www.heart.org/en/news/2020/10/07/pandemic-these-five-hobbies-topped-the-charts

Home / News / Survey / **Top 5 hobbies during Covid-19 Pandemic Lockdown**

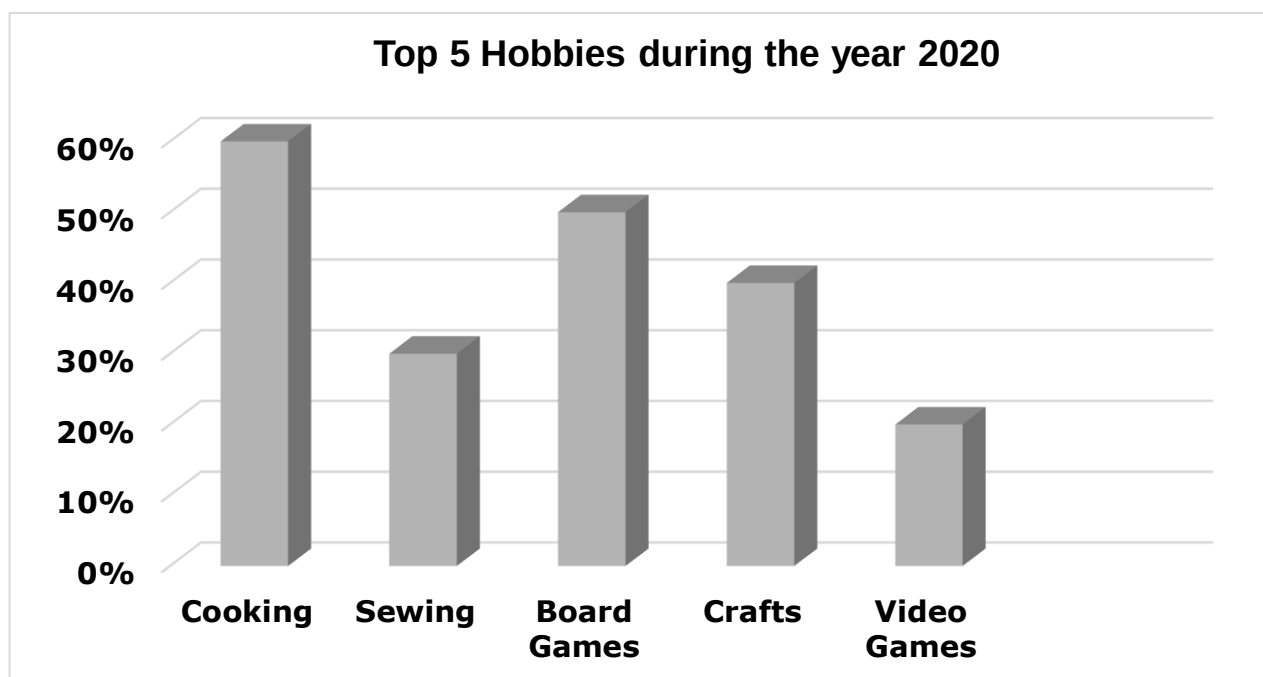
Uploaded: October 8, 2022

By Michael Merschel, Healthy Heart Association News



These Five Hobbies Topped the Charts during Covid-19 Lockdown

The graph below shows the percentage of people who engaged in one of these 5 hobbies in one year. This graph was created by using information from an online survey. The survey was done with persons aged between 13-17.



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On the Grasshopper and Cricket

- 1 The poetry of earth is never dead:
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead;*¹
That is the Grasshopper's—he takes the lead
In summer luxury,—he has never done
With his delights; for when tired out with fun
8 He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.*²
- 9 The poetry of earth is ceasing never:
On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought*³ a silence, from the stove*⁴ there shrills
The Cricket's*⁵ song, in warmth increasing ever,
And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,
14 The Grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

By John Keats

*¹ mead – meadow

*² weed – wild plants

*³ wrought – created

*⁴ stove – heating equipment to cook on or warm a room.

*⁵ Cricket – an insect similar to the grasshopper but with shorter legs.