

II 次の文を読んで、問いに答えなさい。

It is often said that reading in dim¹ light will damage your eyesight. (A), the only “damage” reading in a dimly-lit place will do when compared to reading in a well-lit place is to cause extra eyestrain, which will go away simply by resting your eyes. This should not be too much of a surprise given the fact that people have been reading by candlelight for centuries without many reports of rapidly reduced eyesight. Actually, the opposite has happened. Rates of things like myopia,² a condition often associated with reading in dim light, continue to rise even though we now have plenty of bright light sources. (B), perhaps because parents the world over are trying to get their children to go to sleep rather than to try to read by nightlight³ or the like, the belief that reading in the dark can hurt your eyes has become widespread.

This myth even made it onto the list of “Seven Medical Myths that Doctors are Most Likely to Believe,” a list put together by the British Medical Journal. In addition to doctors, 56.3% of teachers surveyed say that in order to maintain good eye health, people should (C) in dim light. To date, no scientific study has ever been able to clearly show that reading in dim light hurts your eyesight in the long term more than reading in a brightly-lit area.

It should be noted that people who read a lot focus their eyes on things close up for long periods of time. People who do a lot of “close-eye work,” like working on computers all day or doing a lot of sewing or the like do have (D) from myopia. However, dim lighting does not appear to make this worse. It is simply that too much reading seems to contribute to eventually developing myopia.

The reason why this is the case is (E). However, the relationship appears to be strong between groups of people who do a lot of close-eye

work and their tendency to develop myopia at a much higher rate than the average. Most eye doctors are prepared to say that close-eye work is for some a major contributing factor to getting myopia. Although, of course, until someone figures out exactly how and proves in a scientific manner why this is, they cannot say for sure, because the existence of a relationship does not always prove there is a cause. The leading theory, which seems possible enough, is that the near constant straining of muscles to focus the eye stretches the eyeball⁴ a bit, and over the years gradually causes a permanent lengthening⁵ of the eyeball, which makes the person (F) myopia as they age.

Reading in dim light does seem to increase eyestrain, so some think that this makes the above problem worse. Even if this theory is correct, the opinion among eye doctors is that it is very (G) that the difference is going to be so great that it produces a noticeable acceleration⁶ of the development of myopia compared to reading in a well-lit area.

The reason that reading in low light is thought to increase eyestrain is that your eyes have to work a lot harder to focus on the words. Your iris⁷ is trying to open your pupil⁸ as wide as possible to let in more light, while at the same time your eye is also trying to focus that small amount of light from the words onto your retina⁹ just right so that you can see the difference between the words and the page itself. According to Professor Howard Howland of Cornell University, this is done by your muscles lengthening your eye even more than normal when reading to bring everything into focus.

Whether you read in low light or good light for long periods of time, the resulting eyestrain is (H). In order to recover, the experts recommend that you simply rest your eyes once in a while. You can do so^② by occasionally taking a break from focusing on something close up and looking at something far away. As a general rule, eye doctors tend to

recommend taking a break from focusing your eyes on close up things for a minute or two every 15-30 minutes. Also, closing your eyes for a minute helps because, while reading, you typically blink¹⁰ about $\frac{1}{4}$ the amount you would normally, so your eyes can get a bit dry. Trying to train yourself to blink regularly while concentrating is not usually possible, so this tends to work better for most people.

(Adapted from a work by Daven Hiskey)

Daven Hiskey Reading in Dim Lighting will not damage your eyes. May 23, 2012, Today I Found Out. com.
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(注)

1. dim 薄暗い
2. myopia 近視
3. nightlight 一晩中つけておく弱い明かり
4. eyeball 眼球
5. lengthening 伸長
6. acceleration 加速
7. iris (瞳孔の大きさを調節して) 網膜に入る光の量を調節する薄い膜
8. pupil 瞳孔
9. retina 網膜
10. blink まばたく

[1] 本文の **(A)** ~ **(H)** それぞれに入れるのもっとも適当なものを
(1) ~ (5) から一つ選び、その番号を解答欄にマークしなさい。

- (A) (1) For example (2) However (3) In addition
(4) Indeed (5) Therefore
- (B) (1) As a result (2) In other words (3) Otherwise
(4) Similarly (5) Yet
- (C) (1) avoid reading (2) consider reading
(3) discover how to read (4) often read
(5) teach reading
- (D) (1) **a greater tendency to suffer** (2) **a guarantee of suffering**
(3) a smaller chance of suffering (4) **the personality to suffer**
(5) the proof of suffering
- (E) (1) clearly proven (2) common knowledge among eye doctors
(3) **not yet fully understood** (4) of no interest
(5) simple to explain
- (F) (1) cure their (2) **develop** (3) ignore
(4) lessen their (5) **safe from**
- (G) (1) important (2) logical (3) natural
(4) **possible** (5) **unlikely**
- (H) (1) dangerous (2) not focused (3) not serious
(4) permanent (5) urgent

[2] 下線部㉔～㉖それぞれの意味または内容として、もっとも適当なものを
(1)～(4)から一つ選び、その番号を解答欄にマークしなさい。

㉔ This

- (1) That reading in low light leads to myopia
- (2) That people have been reading by candlelight for centuries
- (3) That the only effect from reading in a dimly-lit place is extra eyestrain
- (4) That the damage caused by reading in a well-lit place is permanent eyestrain

㉕ this

- (1) the recent increase of myopia
- (2) the higher rate of close-eye work
- (3) close-eye work being a cause of myopia
- (4) strong connections between groups of people

㉖ this

- (1) healing your myopia
- (2) **making your myopia worse**
- (3) opening your pupil in good light to focus on words
- (4) focusing the small amount of light with a wide, open pupil

㉗ do so

- (1) relax the eyes
- (2) read with enough light
- (3) **focus on something close up**
- (4) **read for long periods of time**

⊕ this

- (1) focusing on something far away
- (2) taking breaks for 15-30 minutes
- (3) closing your eyes for a short while
- (4) blinking a quarter as many times as usual