

Your full name: Arsène LAPOSTOLLE	57/60
Your group: 409	Total score 19/20

DST d'ANGLAIS
Janvier 2018

Semestre 2

Durée : 1h30

Sans documents, ni traductrice/calculatrice.

Ecrivez au stylo et répondez sur ce dossier, que vous rendrez entier.

Indiquez clairement vos noms et groupes sur le dossier ainsi que sur la copie que vous utiliserez pour la rédaction si vous le souhaitez (question 4).

Total des points : 60

Note globale sur 20

Comprehension – Read the text below.

Missing: hard drive containing Bitcoins worth £4m in Newport landfill site

A digital 'wallet' containing 7,500 Bitcoins that James Howells generated on his laptop is buried under four feet of rubbish

Buried somewhere under four feet of mud and rubbish, in the Docksway landfill site near Newport, Wales, in a space about the size of a football pitch is a computer hard drive worth more than £4million.

It belonged to James Howells, who threw it out when he was clearing up his desk in mid-summer and discovered the part, rescued from a defunct Dell laptop. He found it in a drawer and put it in a bin.

And then last Friday he realized that it held a digital wallet with 7,500 Bitcoins created for almost nothing in 2009 - and then worth about the same.

"You know when you put something in the bin, and in your head, say to yourself 'that's a bad idea'? I really did have that," Howells, who works in IT, told the *Guardian*. "I don't have an exact date, the only time period I can give – and I've been racking my own brains – is between 20 June and 10 August. Probably mid-July". At the time he obviously threw them away, the 7,500 Bitcoins on the hard-drive were worth around £500,000. Since then, the cryptocurrency's value has soared, passing \$1,000 on Wednesday afternoon.

Although Bitcoins have recently become part of the zeitgeist, Howells generated his in early 2009, when the currency was only known in tech circles. At that time, a few months after its launch, it was comparatively easy to "mine" the digital currency, effectively creating money by computing: Howells ran a program on his laptop for a week to generate his stash. Nowadays, doing the same would require enormously expensive computing power.

That lost hard drive, though, contains the cryptographic "private key" that is needed to be able to access and spend the Bitcoins; without it, the "money" is lost forever.

And Howells didn't have a backup.

Howells stopped mining after a week because his girlfriend complained that the laptop was getting too noisy and hot while it ran the programs to solve the complex mathematical problems needed to create new Bitcoins.

In 2010, the Dell XPS N1710 broke after he accidentally tipped lemonade on it, so he dismantled it for parts. Most were thrown away or sold, but he kept the hard drive in a desk drawer for the next three years – until that fateful summer day when he had the clear-out.

Howells didn't realize his mistake until Friday. Since then, he said, "I've searched high and low. I've tried to retrieve files from all of my USB sticks, from all of my hard drives. I've tried everything just in case I had a backup file, or had copied it by accident. And ... nothing."

He even went down to the landfill site itself. "I had a word with one of the guys down there, explained the situation. And he actually took me out in his truck to where the landfill site is, the current ditch they're working on. It's about the size of a football field, and he said something from three or four months ago would be about three or four feet down."

After he stopped mining Bitcoins in 2009, Howells hadn't given the currency much thought. "I hadn't kept up on Bitcoin, I'd been distracted. I'd had a couple of kids since then, I'd been doing the house up, and forgot about it until it was in the news again."

Howells considered retrieving the hard drive himself, but was told that "even for the police to find something, they need a team of 15 guys, two diggers, and all the personal protection equipment. So for me to **fund** that, it's not possible without the guarantee of money at the end." As such, he's resigned to never getting the virtual money back.

"There's a pot of gold there for someone ... If they were to offer me a share, fair enough," he said. "If they were to go out and find it for themselves ... it's my mistake throwing the hard drive out, at the end of the day."

A spokeswoman from Newport council **emphasized** that any treasure hunters turning up to the landfill site wouldn't be allowed in, but "obviously, if it was easily retrieved, we'd return it."

"I'm at the point where it's either laugh about it or cry about it," Howells says. "Why aren't I out there with a shovel now? I think I'm just resigned to never being able to find it."

Alex Hern, *The Guardian*, 27 November 2013.

Question 1. Vocabulary – Look at the words in bold letters in the text and choose what they mean in this text - circle the correct answer for each word. (10 points)

1. "defunct" out means: old not functioning expensive cheap
2. "IT" means: Information Technology Internet Trade Insider Technician Intelligence Team
3. "clear-out" means: landfill rubbish chance tidy up
4. "soared" means: risen changed become famous collapsed

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|-------------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|--------------|
| 5. "launch" means: | end | commerce | brand | introduction |
| 6. "stash" means: | data | bag | treasure | present |
| 7. "tipped" means: | gave advice | spilled | bought | offered |
| 8. "dismantled" means: | broke | took to pieces | gave away | began |
| 9. "fund" means: | finance | condone | finish | realise |
| 10. "emphasized" means: | advertised | showcased | pointed out | forbade |

10

Question 2. Right or wrong? Circle T or F and justify with a quote from the text

(10 points)

10

- James Howells deliberately threw his hard drive away..... (T) F
 Quote: "He found it in a drawer and put it in a bin"
- In 2009, few people knew about Bitcoins..... (T) F
 Quote: "In early 2009, when the currency was only known in tech circles"
- James Howells is familiar with computers..... (T) F
 Quote: "Howells, who works in IT"
- He stopped mining bitcoins in 2009 because it required too much computing power..... T (F)
 Quote: "Howells stopped mining after a few weeks, because his girlfriend complained that the laptop was getting too noisy and hot"
- James Howells will soon organize a treasure hunt to retrieve his digital wallet..... T (F)
 Quote: "Any treasure hunters turning up to the landfill site wouldn't be allowed in"

Question 3. James Howells's story was widely shared on social media: can you explain its popularity in your own words? (60 words - 10 points)

During the past few months, cryptocurrencies made a great buzz worldwide because their values hit the sky because of speculating. Journalists saw that it was a trendy subject and found something to write about it. Then people reading Howells' story shared it widely because it made them laugh or even feel bad for him.

Question 4. Essay - Pick ONE topic and write about 200 words (30 points)

You can write on page 6 or use exam paper if you prefer.

- a- In your opinion, what was the greatest technological innovation of the past ten years?
- b- Would you like to start your own business? Why, or why not?
- c- Who would you choose as the Greatest Person of 2017? Why?

Good luck, and please hand in well-written, clean work.

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DÉPARTEMENT INFORMATIQUE

DISCIPLINE : ANGLAIS

Date de l'épreuve : 17/04/18

Année : 1 Groupe : 109

Ecrire très lisiblement

NOM : CAROSTOLET
(en capitales)

Prénom : ALEXIS

NOTE DE 0 À 20

APPRÉCIATIONS

way too long but well structured,
a few typos

Ne rien écrire dans
cette marge

Since smartphone was invented in 2006, I think we could easily say that the greatest technological innovation of the past ten years is VR. The concept of virtual reality as we understand it today started in the 90s. However, it was too early to present decent prototypes. Then, in the past few years, two different ~~concepts~~ brought fully operational VR headsets to the public market. These are Oculus, owned by Facebook, and Vive, owned by HTC and Valve. And very recently, Microsoft came in the struggle with Windows 10 "mixed reality". For now, it has been a great success. That's ~~was~~ we are going to answer the question: "why is VR the best IT innovation in the past ten years". In order to do this, we'll at first see that it is a technological revolution and then we'll study its very wide usage.

At first, VR is the result of twenty years of technological research.

You certainly remember watching James Cameron's *Avatar* in 3D with bicolor glasses. You may have been disappointed because it killed the colors and looked more like a flat background with 3D sprites on it. With VR and its two high resolution screens at two centimeters of your eyes, you can experience real and truly immersive 3D, without getting an optical headache.

Then, to get immersion even further, physics in VR environment are perfect. Powered by motion tracking sensors on the head set and the controller, it allows you to be physically present in your environment. And when you touch or throw something, it's not glitched like in bad 3D animation, it's perfectly realistic. In addition, the 90Hz screens guarantee you smooth movements.

Finally, VR allows you to escape. If you do the same routine everyday you may certainly appreciate to live a sunrise in a National Park in Iceland to relax. The high resolution screens would allow you a precise contemplation of the shimmering sunray throughout the clouds. You may also visit monuments, museums or even places that don't exist without leaving your home.

VR may also have a lot of purpose that can change our lives.

To begin, the most common way to use VR is entertainment. You can play immersive games, travel somewhere, paint in 3D or even watch film like in a cinema. This is a form of digital entertainment that is very healthy because it gives you to move to interact with things.

Furthermore, VR is used in medicine. On the one hand, it allows surgeon student to train without using a real corpse; which is much cheaper. On the other hand, in psychology, it's used to cure phobia. Indeed, it allows the psychologist to make someone who has phobic fear of something to face it without it being real. It works pretty well to cure the fear of plane, heights, and spiders.

Then, an unexpected use of VR is for marketing. Sales specialists use it to virtualize a store before its construction. That allows them to simulate the client path through the store to optimize product placement in order to encourage the client to buy more, and increase profit.

To conclude, we have shown that VR is a fast growing market because it bears a lot of achieved technologies of the twenty first years. It's an unprecedented experience and a brand

new creation tool. We can expect it to expand to a lot of domains. For now, it still costs a lot for the average consumer, but the price will certainly decrease with the time, opening this tech to everyone. This may lead us to ask ourselves what will be the next IT innovation in the next ten years. We can assume it to be quantum computing but we can't know in advance to what extent it will be an unprecedented revolution.