Reading B2

*Установите соответствие тем A – H текстам 1 – 7.  Используйте каждую букву только один раз. В задании одна тема лишняя.*

A.    CAR RACE                       E.    HELPFUL MACHINE
B.    REAL PLEASURE            F.    DIFFERENT TOYS
C.    FAVOURITE TOY            G.    UNUSUAL CAR
D.    SERIOUS PROBLEMS     H.    NOBLE GIFT

1.    Things boys play with are not like objects girls play with. Boys often have more freedom to run about and they get guns, train sets, toy trucks and toy cars. Electronic games are very popular among young boys. Toys for girls are much quieter and more passive. Young girls often get things like dolls, dresses, and pictures to colour.

2.    "Teddies” are an important part of British culture. Most people in Britain have a teddy bear when they are young, and most people are very fond of their special bear, even when they are 30 or 40 years old! Many famous people like film stars or pop stars or politicians collect "teddies”. These people have donated their old friends to the teddy bear  museum which is in Stratford-on-Avon in England. Many tourists go to this place, because it is the birthplace of Shakespeare, but they often love the teddy bear museum more.

3.    Computer games are a multimillion dollar industry, but people who really enjoy games are not satisfied with playing against the computer. They want to play against real people and most computer games allow you to do that just by joining up with other players on the Internet. Regular players say that this is where their true enjoyment of games can be found. With some games up to 60 people can take part. It's a good way to meet people and it gives you something to talk about.

4.    The big American company General Motors has developed a vehicle that uses the power of the sun instead of petrol. The vehicle is called Sunraycer which means "ray of the sun"+"racer". Sunraycer has just taken part in a race against 25 solar-powered vehicles. Sunraycer covered the great distance in 45 hours at a speed of 41 miles an hour at temperatures as high as 48°C. It is certainly the car of the future.

 5.    Computers are a great technological invention of the 20th century. Their advantages are numerous yet much can be said against them. The main disadvantage of computers is that looking at a screen for long periods of time is bad for the eyes, and sitting on a chair for hours is not healthy. Also, people who use computers have a tendency to become anti-social and stay at home. The strongest argument against the use of computers is that the more jobs which are done by computers, the less are done by people.

6.    Thirty years ago few people realized that computers were about to become part of our everyday lives. This short period of time has seen great changes in business, education and public administration. Jobs which took weeks to do in past, are now carried out in minutes. Schoolchildren have become as familiar with hardware and software as their parents were with pencils and exercise books and they don’t worry about mistakes having a computer.

7.    Generous granddad Martin Rossiter, from Macclesfield, has built a treehouse for his grandchildren – costing £35,000! The top-of-the-range two-storey treehouse features a series of rope walkways between the sycamores, oaks and pine trees in Martin’s garden and took builders five days to make. He plans to add running water, electricity and bunk beds to make it perfect play-den. Martin has 12 grandchildren – aged from 2 to12 – but the rest of his family believe he secretly made the house for himself!

Reading B2

*Установите соответствие между заголовками A – Н и текстами 1 – 7. Занесите свои ответы в таблицу. Используйте каждую букву только один раз. В задании один заголовок лишний.*

**A. The House of Commons
B. Parliamentary Procedure
C. The House of Lords
D. Westminster     E. The System of Government
F. Parliamentary Committees
G. Whitehall
H. The Crown**

1. Her Majesty’s Government, in spite of its name, derives its authority and power from its party representation in Parliament. Parliament is housed in the Palace of Westminster, once a home of the monarchy. Like the monarchy, Parliament is an ancient institution, dating from the middle of the thirteenth century. Parliament is the seat of British democracy, but it is perhaps valuable to remember that while the House of Lords was created in order to provide a council of the nobility for the king, the Commons were summoned originally in order to provide the king with money.

2. The reigning monarch is not only head of state but symbol of the unity of the nation. The monarchy is Britain’s oldest secular institution, its continuity for over a thousand years broken only once by a republic that lasted a mere eleven years (1649-60). The monarchy is hereditary, the succession passing automatically to the oldest male child, or in the absence of males to the oldest female offspring of the monarch. In law the monarch is head of the executive and of the judiciary, head of the Church of England, and commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

3. The dynamic power of Parliament lies in its lower chamber. Of its 650 members, 523 represent constituencies in England, 38 in Wales, 72 in Scotland and 17 in Northern Ireland. There are only seats in the Commons debating chamber for 370 members, but except on matters of great interest, it is unusual for all members to be present at any one time. Many MPs find themselves in other rooms of the Commons, participating in a variety of committees and meetings necessary for an effective parliamentary process.

4. Britain is a democracy, yet its people are not, as one might expect in a democracy, constitutionally in control of the state. The constitutional situation is an apparently contradictory one. As a result of a historical process the people of Britain are subjects of the Crown, accepting the Queen as the head of the state. Yet even the Queen is not sovereign in any substantial sense since she receives her authority from Parliament, and is subject to its direction in almost all matters. This curious situation came about as a result of a long struggle for power between the Crown and Parliament during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries.

5. Her Majesty’s Government governs in the name of the Queen, and its hub, Downing Street, lies in Whitehall, a short walk from Parliament. Following a general election, the Queen invites the leader of the majority party represented in the Commons, to form a government on her behalf. Government ministers are invariably members of the House of Commons, but infrequently members of the House of Lords are appointed. All government members continue to represent "constituencies” which elected them.

6. Each parliamentary session begins with the "State Opening of Parliament”, a ceremonial occasion in which the Queen proceeds from Buckingham Palace to the Palace of Westminster where she delivers the Queen’s Speech from her throne in the House of Lords. Her speech is drafted by her government, and describes what the government intends to implement during the forthcoming session. Leading members of the Commons may hear the speech from the far end of the chamber, but are not allowed to enter the House of Lords.

7. The upper chamber of Parliament is not democratic in any sense at all. It consists of four categories of peer. The majority are hereditary peers, a total of almost 800, but of whom only about half take an active interest in the affairs of the state. A smaller number, between 350 and 400, are "life” peers – an idea introduced in 1958 to elevate to the peerage certain people who rendered political or public service to the nation. The purpose was not only to honour but also to enhance the quality of business done in the Lords.