NOTE MAKING (10%)

Read the text and complete the task that follows.

I According to studies, in many schools in the United States of America, personal computers (PCs) have failed to aid students' learning or improve test scores, or equip them with the analysis and communication skills that today's workplace demands. The problems include a reliance on paper lesson plans that do not blend in with technology, and inadequate teacher training and technical support. Also at fault is American education system's emphasis on teaching children strategies for raising standardised test scores to meet requirements of No Child Left Behind Act policy, often leaving little room for children's creativity. Hence, it is obvious that the problems created by the presence of computers in classrooms are wide ranging and varied.

II By the '90s, the spread of word processing software made PCs in classrooms more common. But many of the programmes have fallen short of expectations, say educators. A four-year study of math and reading software in 132 poor urban schools, released by Mathematica Policy Research(MPR) last year, found that test scores were not significantly higher in classrooms that used the products. A 2003 study by Soloway and another academician found that 65% of teachers said they used computers less than 15 minutes a week in their classes. "In many of these schools, computers are turned off in the back of the classroom," says Wagner of Harvard University. At others, "I've been in schools with one-to-one laptop programs where kids are doing the equivalent of worksheets on their laptops," he says. "You don't need computers to do that—it's a big waste of resources."

III Nearly all computers in schools have internet filters applied. These filters are often crude in the websites. They prohibit students from visiting and viewing harmful or obscene websites. However, this occasionally means that students are unable to access useful and insightful resources, preventing them from reading deeper into a subject. This can lead to frustration and limit the depth of knowledge a student is able to gain.

IV Although many schools apply internet filters to their computers, it is still possible for students to use proxy servers to access unsuitable resources such as gaming, social media networks and pornographic materials. In particular, browsing social media websites and chat rooms expose students to the risks of potentially dangerous child predators who seek for victims.

V Using computers in the classroom often leads to students becoming distracted. Regardless of Internet filters, students are still able to access social media, gaming and potentially harmful websites, all of which serves to distract them from the primary focus of the lesson. Although there are tools that educators can use to combat distraction, such as supervision of all computer use or turning off monitors from their own computer, this results in temporary disruptions to classes which make teaching difficult.

VI Many students already spend lengthy amounts of time on their computers outside of the classroom, and using computers in schools can lead to long-term social and health issues. The overuse of computers can prevent children from developing well-rounded personalities, with students preferring to interact through electronic means rather than face-to-face conversations. Furthermore, the Mass General Hospital for Children suggests that improper use and overuse of computers can lead to health problems such as headaches, fatigue and repetitive strain injuries in the eyes, back, neck, shoulders, arms and hands.

VII Students who do not have computers at home may be unfamiliar and unable to use computers, while most students will already have a good working knowledge. These students tend to slow down classes because they require special attention and additional training from teachers. This could lead to these students to be singled out, ridiculed and face embarrassment.

VIII What is needed, say educators and technology advocates, is a 21st-century curriculum that harnesses PCs and the Internet to equip students with skills needed in the modern workplace, like critical thinking, analysis, and communications. The task is seen as especially urgent at a time when American school children's math and science mastery has been slipping as the U.S. competes with China and other industrial rivals.

Adapted from Aaron Ricadela, *Rethinking Computers in the Classroom*. BloombergBusinessweek, December 16, 2008 and Henry Francis, *Negative Effects of Computers in the Classroom*. eHow.com

Based on Text 2, fill in the blanks to complete the notes below.

Title: _____ (1m)

A. Problems of Using Computers

- Word processing softwares fall short of expectations as proven by:
  - ◊ _____(1m)
  - ◊ 2003 study by Soloway & another academician

- Problems of using internet filters in classroom:
  - ◊ Unable to access useful and insightful resources
    - ⇒ _____(1m)
    - ⇒ limit the depth of knowledge
  - ◊ _____(1m)
    - ⇒ gaming
    - ⇒ _____(1/2m)
    - ⇒ chat rooms
  - ◊ Educators assume students are safe from undesirable websites

- Distraction caused by using computers in classroom due to:
  - ◊ Ability to access _____(1m)

- Emergence of long-term social and health issues that
  - ◊ _____(1m)
  - ◊ Cause headaches, fatigues and repetitive strain injuries

- Students who do not own PCs being _____(1m) because they
  - ◊ Slow classes down
  - ◊ _____(1m)

B. Ways to Overcome Problems of Using Computers

- Remedial approach:
  - ◊ Curriculum designed to harness PCs and the Internet to:
    _____(1m),
    e.g:
    - ⇒ Critical thinking
    - ⇒ _____(1/2m)
    - ⇒ Communications

(10m)