Computers are ubiquitous. In other words, they exist in every part of our lives. As computers have become less expensive, they have been purchased by more and more families for their homes. Because of this, many children begin to use computers at an early age. Even if they are not available in their home, children almost certainly will begin to come into contact with them in school.

Many children find that using computers gives them a sense of power and accomplishment. Moreover, unlike many adults whose first or primary contact with them is work-related, most children first use computers for entertainment purposes like playing games. This is by no means the only use that children have for computers. Computer-use is promoted in schools, and therefore, children use them for accessing information, as well as for writing stories and research papers.

Because computer-use is widely popular with children, it poses certain physical health risks for them. One of the most compelling arguments made against the use of computers is eye-strain, which may include dryness due to not blinking enough, headaches, and blurry vision. Another possible risk of using computers is the risk of repetitive motion injury such as carpal tunnel syndrome. This risk may be greater for children than for adults as their musculature and skeletal systems are not fully formed yet.

Besides these physical effects, existing research indicates that excessive computer-use significantly influences children's social skills. Concerns have been raised that children who form "electronic friendships" through computers, instead of personal friendships with their peers, might not develop their interpersonal skills. The effects of computer-use appear to depend as much on the type of activity as on the amount of time spent in front of a screen. As mentioned earlier, game-playing has long been the predominant use of home computers among children—especially among younger boys. Although the available research indicates that limited game-playing has little social impact on children, concerns have been raised about excessive game-playing, especially when the games contain violence. Research suggests that playing violent computer games can increase children's aggressive behaviour in general.

To conclude, although existing research suggests that the physical and social effects of children's computer-use vary widely, many of the possible social effects are as yet unexplored.

PART A. Answer the question below.
According to the text, what are the two social influences of excessive use of computers on children? Explain in 2-3 sentences.
PART B. You are writing for a PTA (Parent–Teacher Association) magazine. In one paragraph of 150-180 words, discuss two or three solutions to the problem of excessive computer-use among children.

You may choose from the following points or you may develop your own ideas.

* paying attention to the activities children use computers for
* limiting children’s computer-use to reasonable lengths of time
* encouraging children to participate in social and sporting activities

Write your paragraph on the lines provided below.
One effect is that children may not develop interpersonal skills. That is, they cannot make personal friends easily, instead they form electronic friendships with their peers. Moreover, they may develop aggressive behavior if they play violent computer games too much.