

You are going to read a magazine article about a rally driver. For questions 1–8, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Driving in the desert

My family are farmers in France, and by the age of ten, I could manoeuvre a tractor into a field to pick up straw bales. For my driving test, I learned how to reverse into a parking space by practising between two tractors.

I'm the extraterrestrial of the family: I've always needed to prove that I can adapt to new situations. I'd never left France until 1998 – and then I went to Australia, the most distant country possible. I worked on a sheep farm there, driving a 4x4 all the time, and spent four months driving around the country on my own. That was when I first came into contact with the desert, and I wanted to return to it.

But it was my competitive spirit that drew me to the all-female Gazelles Rally in the Moroccan desert. I did it to see if I could survive in the desert and not be afraid. Taking part in the rally involves spending eight days in the desert, including two sets of two-day marathons when you're on your own overnight with your team-mate. The rally will push you to the limits of your physical and mental capacity, so it's very important to choose the right team-mate, to make sure you have the same goal and the same way of working. But the key thing is for you both to keep your courage and remain confident.

Participants – known as the *gazelles* – drive 4x4s, quad bikes, motorbikes or trucks, and use a compass and a map to navigate their way to marker flags that have been planted in the desert – always in places that are really difficult to get at. You have to drive up and down huge sand dunes, the highest of which are about twenty metres. Every morning at base camp you have to prepare your maps, by marking the position of the day's flags. Then you have to plan the best route to them. It takes time to learn how to do this, how to understand the landscape, because you are all alone in the emptiness – there are no landmarks, it is all just flat. On our first day, my team-mate and I felt quite frightened by it

– we thought we'd get lost. So we decided to drive in a straight line for half an hour in search of geographical features. Then we found some mountains.

It rained a lot during the rally, and the thing that scared us most was the thought of not being able to get out of the mud. Some women were stuck for about twelve hours overnight before the mud dried. My team-mate and I managed to get through, though, because we set off first, when the ground was less damaged. Each vehicle carries a satellite tracking system with it, and every half-hour the rally organisers use this to check on you: if a car isn't moving, they go to the rescue. Once, we were all alone in our tent in a storm, and feeling a bit scared. An official rally vehicle came and reassured us that we wouldn't be washed away.

I had great difficulty finding a sponsor – it costs about €6000 to hire a vehicle and €14,000 to participate in the rally, plus you have to hire safety equipment. It's always the people you least expect who help you most. The big dealers for four-wheel-drive vehicles refused to finance what they called 'a girls' jaunt in the desert'. It was a small, independent garage that provided us with an 11-year-old 4x4 for nothing – and we didn't have a single breakdown.

Speed is not a factor in this competition. Men have a tendency to drive a bit faster than women. They're so sure they've chosen the right route that they're less good at anticipating problems. A man who was doing a television programme on the rally refused to believe that it was difficult or that women could sometimes be better than him.

I want to do the rally again next year. Taking part in it puts life's problems into perspective, and it's also a big thing on my CV: it shows people I can see a project through. When I meet the top people in my company now, I feel far more self-assured.

Tip Strip

- The questions follow the order of the text.
- Read the text carefully. Don't worry if you don't understand every word.
- Try to find your own answer to the questions before you look at options **A**, **B**, **C** and **D**.
- Underline key words in the question, then find the part of the text where the answer is and underline words there.
- Find the option which best answers the question according to what you have found in the text.

Question 1: Read the text carefully. What did she know before she went and what did she discover when she got there?

Question 2: What does the text say about 'choosing the right team-mate'. Read what follows to find the answer.

Question 3: Look before the pronoun to find out what it took time to learn.

Question 4: Look for another way of saying 'greatest fear' in the text.

Question 5: Read carefully about the writer's vehicle.

- 1 Why did the writer go to Australia?
 - A to further develop her driving skills
 - B to get practice in driving in desert conditions
 - C to visit members of her family who farmed there
 - D to experience living in an unfamiliar environment
- 2 In the writer's opinion, the ideal rallying team-mate is someone who
 - A will keep you from feeling afraid at night.
 - B can make up for any weaknesses you have.
 - C does not take the competition too seriously.
 - D will share your general aims and attitudes.
- 3 What does the word 'this' in line 40 refer to?
 - A driving in difficult places
 - B finding important landmarks
 - C deciding which route to take
 - D drawing flags on a map
- 4 The writer's greatest fear in the desert was that she might
 - A lose her way in bad weather.
 - B become stuck in wet ground.
 - C damage her vehicle in the mud.
 - D have to be rescued by other competitors.
- 5 What does the writer say about the cost of the rally?
 - A Hiring a vehicle was her biggest expense.
 - B Safety equipment was provided by the organisers.
 - C She was surprised that a small garage sponsored her.
 - D A new vehicle would have reduced her maintenance bill.
- 6 By using the phrase 'a girls' jaunt' (line 68), the big dealers showed that they felt
 - A unimpressed by the writer's driving skills.
 - B a lack of respect for this particular event.
 - C sure that the writer wouldn't complete the rally.
 - D an unwillingness to sponsor rallying in general.
- 7 According to the writer, men rally drivers
 - A fail to realise when something is about to go wrong.
 - B tend to feel overconfident when driving at speed.
 - C seem to have fewer problems with navigation.
 - D refuse to accept the advice of women.
- 8 In the last paragraph, the writer suggests that taking part in the rally
 - A has improved her career prospects.
 - B has impressed her superiors at work.
 - C is something that she will do every year.
 - D is creating certain problems in her private life.

You are going to read an article about the music used in gyms. Seven sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A–H** the one which fits each gap (**9–15**). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Music to get fit by

An aerobics teacher argues that music can increase our workout productivity

At college, I used to go to the gym regularly but I never liked the music they played in the classes. I trained as an instructor largely so that I could have control of the stereo. Now I teach twenty hours of aerobic classes a week and so I always associate physical activity with banging house music at 140 beats per minute.

This is not as crazy as you might think. Music and exercise have long been known to be close companions. **9** He is also the architect of the Brunel Music Rating Inventory (BMRI), designed to rate the motivational qualities of music.

Karageorghis says we have an underlying predisposition to react to musical stimuli. 'Music is beneficial,' he explains, 'because of the similarities between rhythm and human movement. The synchronisation of music with exercise consistently demonstrates increased levels of work output among exercise participants.' **10**

For James Cracknell, the rower, the ideal music was a Red Hot Chili Peppers' album, which he says played an integral part in his preparation and, ultimately, his Olympic victory. **11** If you are not familiar with this word, it means that during repetitive exercise, music essentially diverts attention away from the sensation of fatigue. The right music can almost persuade your body that you are in fact having a nice sit down and a coffee.

Not everyone, however, shares the same taste in tunes. 'Can you turn that racket down?' said a participant in one of my classes before storming out. Reaching a consensus on music is notoriously tricky – which makes communal exercise classes problematic. There are, however, some rules that professional fitness instructors follow. **12**

Most importantly, however, the music should mirror your heartbeat. The instructor should choose the music to go with the different phases of a class, from the warm up, to high intensity, to the final relaxing phase. It's advisable to follow this sequence when you work out alone, too, and not make the mistake a good friend of mine made. **13**

Instructors and gyms often buy ready-mixed CDs that come with a music licence, without which they can be fined heavily. A frequent complaint by those who go to classes is that they hear the same old songs over and over again. **14** It is also true, sadly, that most people respond best in motivational terms to quite awful songs – music they wouldn't necessarily be proud to have on their iPod.

15 In order to prepare mentally, for example, golfers can get hold of a special range of music just for them. Whatever your sport, I'd like to give you some final words of advice. As Karageorghis suggests, enjoy the beat and let the music motivate you, but never forget your main objective is to exercise and music is only there to help you do that.

Tip Strip

- Read through the base text for general understanding.
- Read the text around each gap carefully.
- Read the sentences and find one that fits in with the meaning of each part. Check for topic and language links before and after the sentence.
- Read the paragraph again to check that it makes a complete sentence with your answer in place.

Question 9: The sentence before the gap describes music and exercise as 'close companions'. Which sentence refers to the relationship between music and exercise?

Question 11: The gap is followed by 'not familiar with this word'. Can you find a word that needs explaining in the sentences?

Question 12: The sentence before the gap mentions 'some rules'. Can you find a sentence that gives an example of a rule?

Question 13: Do you need to find a sentence that describes the mistake that was made?

- A** But perhaps the most useful thing about music is that it allows even the humble gym-goer or runner to practise a technique used by elite athletes, known as 'disassociation'.
- B** These days you can find music tailored to suit an incredibly diverse range of sports and exercise needs.
- C** One of them is that the music must be appropriate to the type of class and not just the instructor's personal enthusiasm for a particular genre or artist.
- D** This is mostly because only a limited number of them are released for public performance each year, and partly because teachers universally favour the most popular tracks.
- E** The most convenient is the gym called *Third Space* in London's Soho, which does several sessions a week to live DJ accompaniment.
- F** He was cooling down to techno music, which left him feeling nervous and twitchy all day.
- G** Choose the right music and, according to Karageorghis, you can up your workout productivity by as much as twenty percent.
- H** Dr Costas Karageorghis, a sports and exercise psychologist who is also a musician, has spent more than a decade studying the link between athletic activity and music.

Part 3

Tip Strip

- You do not need to read the whole text first.
- Read each question and underline key words.
- Read the text quickly and find the information. Remember the text is long and contains information which you may not need.
- When you find the relevant part of the text, read it carefully.
- Questions and text will not contain the same words. You need to look for the meaning, e.g. Question 17 'professional activities' = 'marketing specialist'.

Question 18: Look for a similar way of saying 'loss of privacy'.

Question 24: 'confidence'. Be careful! The answer is not in paragraph A.

Questions 25/26: Look for two similar ways of saying you get a 'response'.

Question 27: 'writing'. Be careful! The answer is not in paragraph E.

You are going to read a magazine article about five people who each write a personal blog. For questions **16–30**, choose from the people (**A–E**). The people may be chosen more than once.

- | | |
|----------|-----------------------|
| A | Ann Handley |
| B | Dave Armano |
| C | Carol Krishner |
| D | Debbie Weil |
| E | Tristan Hussey |

Which person

- | | | |
|--|----|----------------------|
| started writing the blog as a way of improving career prospects? | 16 | <input type="text"/> |
| says they use the personal blog in professional activities? | 17 | <input type="text"/> |
| warns prospective bloggers about a loss of privacy? | 18 | <input type="text"/> |
| mentions having certain difficulties as a teenager? | 19 | <input type="text"/> |
| made a decision to improve the quality of the blog? | 20 | <input type="text"/> |
| is not concerned about making errors in the blog? | 21 | <input type="text"/> |
| felt no need to learn anything new before starting to write blogs? | 22 | <input type="text"/> |
| believes that blogging has improved their language skills? | 23 | <input type="text"/> |
| initially lacked confidence in their ability to attract readers to the blog? | 24 | <input type="text"/> |
| was surprised by the response to the blog? | 25 | <input type="text"/> |
| compares the ease of writing blogs to other types of writing? | 27 | <input type="text"/> |
| values the fact that the blog provides a break from work? | 28 | <input type="text"/> |
| remembers other people being less open about what they had written? | 29 | <input type="text"/> |
| has offered other new bloggers help in starting their blogs? | 30 | <input type="text"/> |

Ann Handley Like many of my school friends, I used to spend hours every day writing a diary. But while they kept them hidden under their beds, I needed an audience, interaction and feedback. One day, my teacher encouraged me to join a pen friend organisation and I used to write pages of fascinating detail about my teacher, my friends, my dog ... I even invented a few personalities, the details of which were far more interesting than my own life. So when one of my colleagues explained to me what blogging was all about – the frequent postings, the feedback, the trackbacks – I felt confident that I already knew all about it. I am now a marketing specialist and my blog is a business tool. But at the same time I am reliving the joy of communicating and the thrill of the conversation.

Dave Armano A year ago I was a professional minding my own business. When I started reading blogs, I would say to myself: 'There's so much information out there – so many smart people.' I decided to start my own blog, but I had no idea what I was doing. I was basically a nobody and I was trying to get people to listen to me. What was I thinking? But then I created a visual for my blog and before I knew it, I had all these other blogs linking to me – doing weird stuff like trackbacks. I had no idea what a trackback was, but I went from forty hits a day to close to a hundred overnight. It was amazing! That's when I stopped to think: if I wanted traffic, I needed to get some good content there, and that's what really worked for me.

Carol Krishner It's great to have my personal blog because I feel free and if I make mistakes I learn from the experience. I'm a lecturer, and it's refreshing to be able to step outside my academic interests and into a different world. But it's interesting that when you choose topics to write about you give others hints about yourself, and people do get to know you. So it's not the

thing to do if you want to remain anonymous. One of the first lessons I learnt is that the blogosphere is a genuine community. After asking

a question in a blog comment about what qualities are needed in a good blog, I soon got spot-on advice from a blogger I didn't even know. Then I had an invitation to a local face-to-face blogger meet-up, which was an amazing experience.

Debbie Weil I started my first blog exactly three years ago for a very practical reason. It was clear to me that blogs were going to become a useful tool

in my future job as a journalist. I needed to know how to use this new tool, and I figured blogging myself was the quickest way to get up to speed. I learnt quickly and since then I've helped others launch their own personal blogs. The simplicity of blogging software enables me to write short entries without any problems or delays. Writing a 750-word article is a daunting task, but a quick blog entry takes less than a minute. And yet the effect is so significant – I get calls from companies saying they've read my blog and would I be available to give a presentation, for a large fee.

Tristan Hussey Writing has been a struggle for me for most of my academic life. In my first high school year I had serious spelling problems all the time. At college, thanks to a spell checker and some practice, I did fine. In 2004, I was in an administrative job and feeling that I was only using a small portion of my skills. I had heard about this blogging thing and decided I should give it a go. I wrote one blog but deleted it after a couple of days. Then I realised that if I wanted a better job, I'd need to get good at this. So I started reading blogs, writing blogs – it was a daily ritual of reading and writing. And guess what, my writing was getting better, and, incredibly, I got noticed by employers. Today I work for a blog software company.

Why do people start writing blogs? Read the personal stories of five bloggers

You are going to read an extract from a novel. For questions 1–8, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

There was a book with bed-and-breakfast places in it amongst the guidebooks and maps on the back seat of my aunt's car and we found somewhere to stay in there. It was a big, old farmhouse down the end of a track, in a dip. There were three cows in the nearest
7 field, sheep up on a ridge, hens in the yard, a few sheds and barns standing around, and a rosy-cheeked farmer's wife. After a day driving round, I was really impressed with the place initially, thinking we'd finally found the true countryside. Now my aunt could write whatever she was supposed to write about it, and we could both relax and go home.

But when I suggested that, she just said she wasn't expected to write about accommodation. Then, when we got talking to the woman, the place wasn't quite what it seemed anyway. The only field that went with the farmhouse was the one beside the track, with the cows in it, the rest belonged to a farm over the hill. The barns were rented to another farmer and the woman came from the city and was married to a travelling salesman. From close to, you could see the colour in her cheeks came out of a jar marked 'blusher'. The hens were hers, though. She'd been a professional bed-and-breakfast lady for three years, she said, and this was the worst season ever, and, yes, we could have separate rooms, two of each if we liked.

Perhaps she and her husband spent all their money on winter holidays, or perhaps they just didn't have any, but they certainly didn't spend a lot on the house. The bedrooms were huge and they hardly had any furniture in them – just a double bed in each, one of those wardrobes with hangers on one side and shelves down the other, and a wooden chair. There was a dangling light cord over each bed, which worked the centre light, but no bedside lamp.

I could tell that my aunt wasn't knocked out by it because she whispered to me, 'All very

clean, isn't it?' which is what Mum says about a place when she can't find anything else good. 'Well there isn't much to get dirty,' I whispered back. But the woman, Mrs Vosper, obviously assumed we'd stay, so we did. She asked if we were on holiday, and I listened with interest to my aunt's answer. I don't think I really understood at that point what she was doing, and it had got a bit late to ask her myself. I was supposed to know. But all she said was: 'Touring around, taking a bit of a break.' So that didn't help me much.

I picked a room that looked out over the field of cows. I don't think I realised how damp it was until it was time to go to bed. There was a distinctly musty smell in the air, and when I looked closely at the wallpaper I could see that in places it was coming away from the walls. My Mum and her sister are not a bit alike. I knew Mum would never let me sleep in a damp room. I wasn't sure what damp was supposed to do to you, but I knew it wasn't good.

When I got into bed, I didn't feel very sleepy. My aunt had given me a copy of the magazine she was working for, so I had a look at that. It was called *Holiday UK* and the cover 'London' printed across one corner and a colour picture of horses in a park. There was a great long article by my aunt inside, which went on for about six pages, with lots of photographs, and each one had her name up the side of
74 it. But there were also adverts for hotels and restaurants and shops, along with a couple of pages listing places to eat, theatres, cinemas, that sort of stuff. Also it was free, so I realised it couldn't be up to much. Still, I knew they must somehow have enough money to pay her, or they couldn't send her rushing around the countryside like this.

Tip Strip

Question 1: Read the text carefully. What impresses the writer in the first paragraph? What turns out to be different when you read on?

Question 5: How much does the writer know about the purpose of the visit?

Question 8: What makes the writer think that the magazine is probably not very good?

- 1 What did the writer think of the farmhouse when she first saw it?
 - A It was better than the description in the guidebook.
 - B It lived up to her expectations of the countryside.
 - C It was similar to one her aunt had written about.
 - D It reminded her of her own house.

- 2 What does the word 'ridge' (line 7) describe?
 - A an agricultural building
 - B a feature of the landscape
 - C a piece of farm machinery
 - D a way of dividing fields on a farm

- 3 What do we discover about the farm in the second paragraph?
 - A It wasn't as large as it seemed.
 - B None of the animals belonged to it.
 - C The owner lived in another part of the country.
 - D The bed-and-breakfast business was doing well.

- 4 What disappointed the writer about the accommodation offered at the farm?
 - A the lack of space to hang clothes
 - B the fact that it needed cleaning
 - C the limited amount of furniture
 - D the size of the rooms

- 5 When Mrs Vosper asked if they were on holiday, the writer felt
 - A embarrassed by her aunt's reply.
 - B unsure why her aunt had really come.
 - C too tired to take in what was being said.
 - D worried that she might be asked something next.

- 6 What does the writer suggest about her bedroom at the farmhouse?
 - A Her aunt had picked a better one.
 - B It was an unhealthy place to sleep.
 - C Her mother would have approved of it.
 - D It wasn't the one she would have chosen.

- 7 The word 'it' in line 74 refers to
 - A a page in the magazine.
 - B an article in the magazine.
 - C a photograph in the magazine.
 - D an advertisement in the magazine.

- 8 The writer was unimpressed by the magazine because
 - A it didn't contain any interesting stories.
 - B it provided only factual information.
 - C it seemed to be all about London.
 - D it was given away free to people.

Part 2

You are going to read an extract from an article about a trip to study the bottlenose whale. Seven sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A–H** the one which fits each gap (**9–15**). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Bottlenose whales, the deep divers of the North Atlantic

Douglas Chadwick joined the crew of the research boat the Balaena.

I have joined the crew of the *Balaena*, a 15-metre research boat, and we are now a few kilometres off the east coast of Canada, sailing over what seafarers call the *Gully*. *Gully* means 'narrow channel', but this it is more like a drowned Grand Canyon, about ten kilometres across and, in places, over a kilometre straight down to the bottom of the sea. The *Gully*, with its abundant fish, is home to a dozen kinds of cetaceans.

We have come in search of bottlenose whales. Hal Whitehead, a whale expert, and his crew are here to study the behaviour of these enigmatic creatures. I am hoping to see at least one today, but I am prepared to be disappointed. I've been told that, as a rule, the first things you see are spouts, the typical jets of water coming out of their heads, which are visible from a distance. **9**

The northern bottlenose and at least nineteen closely related middle-sized whales form the family *Ziphiidae*. Referred to as 'beaked whales', they account for one in every four species of cetaceans – the marine mammals known as whales, dolphins and porpoises. People love whales, but most of us wouldn't recognise a *ziphiid* if one surged through the living room. **10**

Already some three metres long at birth, northern bottlenoses continue to grow in size until the age of twenty, when they may reach ten metres. Adults weigh between five and seven tonnes, roughly the same as African elephants. **11** 'These are probably among the most intelligent animals on the

entire planet, and we hardly know a thing about them,' says Hal Whitehead.

It is very quiet and all we can hear is the creak of the ship's masts as it sways. Suddenly, breaths like great sighs sound through the fog. **12** The smallest one swims for the boat and a larger companion cuts it off. Then they rejoin the others to float like swollen logs a short distance away.

I can see them well. They have small fins but big, domed heads with imposing foreheads above narrow, protruding jaws. Their heads are two-thirds out of the water now, all pointing our way. **13** We are being studied by northern bottlenose whales, which is only fair, since that is what we came to do to them.

If the bottlenoses don't swim too fast, we can keep up and observe them. Their movements are accompanied by grunts, whistles and cheers made by the blowholes. Every so often, one repeatedly lifts its tail to give the water a resounding slap. This display may function as yet another way to be heard. **14**

The biggest question is what goes on when these animals are not on the surface, which is most of the time. To find out, the researchers attached a time-depth recorder (TDR) to a whale's skin. The TDR stayed on for four-and-a-half hours and surfaced with the first solid data ever obtained about a *ziphiid* in its submarine kingdom. **15** This revelation seems to prove Hal Whitehead's theory that the world's deepest diver is the bottlenose whale – or maybe one of the many other beaked whales yet to be studied.

Tip Strip

Question 9: The sentence before the gap describes what you can see 'from a distance'.

Find a sentence that refers to what happens when you get near.

Question 14: Before the gap there is a description of a display by the whales. Find a sentence that describes another display.

Question 15: Can you find a sentence that links 'the first solid data' and 'This revelation'?

- A** This is not surprising because, even among scientists, these whales probably qualify as the least familiar of all big mammals.
- B** On one of its dives, the bottlenose had reached a depth of 900 metres.
- C** These animals aren't just watching us, they are scanning us with rapid clicking noises just above the range of human hearing.
- D** Whale hunting reduced the population by at least seventy percent, and the species remains depleted today.
- E** The same holds for leaping skyward and making a huge splash, though they may do this just for fun.
- F** Beyond these basic facts, little is known about the lives of northern bottlenoses.
- G** These strange noises come from four creatures, seven to ten metres long, which have risen from the depths.
- H** When you come closer, though, you may find that they have submerged on a long dive, presumably in search of food.

Part 3

You are going to read a magazine article about four women who are referees or umpires in different sports. For questions 16–30, choose from the women (A–D). The women may be chosen more than once.

- A Bentla D’Couth
- B Ria Cortesio
- C Dr Gill Clarke
- D Grace Gavin

Which woman

Tip Strip

Question 16: Look for another way of saying that she concentrates on doing her job.

Question 18: Look for a similar way of saying ‘I felt confident’.

Question 24: Look for a similar way of saying ‘people are unaware’.

- mentions concentrating on her job and not paying attention to anything else?
- was appointed to do a job which she knew would be her last?
- remembers her feeling of confidence when she started refereeing?
- mentions one quality she has that is appreciated by male players?
- gives an example of the sort of tests she has had to go through?
- felt the need to prove to others that she was well suited to the job?
- says people feel more positive about her refereeing after seeing her in action?
- intends to do something so that other women can reach her position?
- feels that the general public is unaware of the demands of her job?
- remembers the excitement of learning about an appointment?
- mentions her good relations with other sports professionals?
- behaves differently when she’s actually doing the job?
- refers to the lack of financial motivation in their work?
- admits one of her skills needs to be better to referee in men’s matches?
- recognises an employer’s positive attitude towards her sporting commitments?

Bentla D'Couth football referee

When you first meet Bentla D'Couth, the first woman football referee in India, appearances can be deceptive. She is soft-spoken and appears shy and unassuming, in sharp contrast to how she is on the field, where she appears loud and aggressive. Bentla was always interested in football, but it was only at the age of eighteen that she learnt that women's football existed. 'In my first refereeing job, I knew that I was very well aware of every detail of the game and that's why I could not go wrong. I was sure I wouldn't make a wrong decision,' she says. 'It doesn't happen now, but I guess earlier people did have that "what would she know" attitude. But once they saw me on the field refereeing a match, they would start coming to me for tips to improve their game. I can say that I haven't had any bad experiences so far.' Bentla knows she needs to improve on her positioning, though. 'Boys play very fast, so it can be a little taxing to keep up with their pace.'

Dr Gill Clarke Olympics umpire

'Sydney was actually my third Olympics and this was a unique achievement as until then no British woman had ever umpired at three Games. It seemed a long time since my first Olympics in Barcelona in 1992, and then Atlanta in 1996.' A World and Olympic panel umpire's performance is assessed in all international matches, and they have to score a minimum 8 out of 10 every time if they want to maintain their position. 'Factors included in the assessment are such things as control, signals and cooperation with the other umpire on the pitch and fitness,' explains Clarke. She arrived in Sydney early to get over the stresses and strains of the flight, ready for the pressures of the two weeks of the Olympic hockey competition, knowing too that it would be her final tournament as she had decided to retire at what she hoped was the top. 'Increasingly, there is more at stake,' she says, 'it is big money for the players and the coaches but for umpires only personal satisfaction at a job well done.'

Ria Cortesio baseball umpire

Ria Cortesio, a native of Davenport, Iowa, is one of five women to have umpired in professional baseball. She is hoping to open doors for others to follow her. Asked what drove her as a young person to become an umpire, she referred to 'the challenge'. 'I don't think that people realise what it means to work games day in and day out at the professional level, always on the road,' she said. 'It's you against the world during the season.' Asked about her interactions with fans during the game last Sunday, she said she was so focussed on her work that she didn't have time to consider her surroundings. 'It really doesn't make any difference being a woman on the field – or even off the field. I do feel a great responsibility to get girls and women involved. The one group of people that I haven't had a single problem with are the players, coaches or managers. If anything, there are some that are more respectful to me than usual.'

Grace Gavin rugby referee

When Grace Gavin was accepted as a referee for the Women's Rugby World Cup, she found out via her mobile phone on her way to the airport. 'I almost bounced myself out of the taxi,' she says. Grace combines her refereeing with a full-time job. 'I strongly believe that if we referee world-class athletes, we must train like world-class athletes. This is difficult to manage when work occupies fifty to sixty hours of my week. My firm is very supportive, though. Of course, my boss was happy when I retired from playing because the black eyes that I sported some Monday mornings were not going down well with clients.' Early in her refereeing career, somebody told her that she would always be handicapped by the perception that she was not fast enough to referee men's rugby. 'I have worked constantly to defeat this perception,' she says. 'Surprisingly, many players like having me as a ref because they can hear my voice. They can pick it out and are able to respond in the heat of the match.'

You are going to read a magazine article about a language course. For questions 1–8, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Travelling to learn

Having decided in later life that it might actually be quite nice to master another language, rather than dusting off my schoolgirl French, I opted for a clean break: Spanish. Three years of half-finished evening classes later, thanks to the enthusiastic teacher's efforts I could order in a restaurant and ask directions, but my conversational skills were limited to asking everybody how many brothers and sisters they had. The only true way to master a language is to live and breathe it for a period of time. I toyed with the idea of taking a language 'immersion' course abroad, but two little words always stopped me: home stay. Then I saw that tour operator *Journey Latin America* had started offering Spanish courses in Peru, amongst other places. The opportunity to realise two long-held ambitions in one holiday – to improve my Spanish and to see Machu Picchu – proved irresistible.

21 My misgivings evaporate the moment I am met by my home-stay family, the Rojas, at Cusco airport. They greet me warmly, like an old friend. Carlos is an optician and Carmucha owns a restaurant. With their four children they live in a comfortable house right in the centre of town. Then I'm whisked off to a family friend's birthday party, where I understand nothing apart from the bit where they sing 'Happy Birthday'. By the end of the evening my face aches from holding an expression of polite, but uncomprehending interest, and I fall into bed wondering what I've let myself in for.

The following morning, I'm off to school and get to know my new school chums. We're aged between 19 and 65, each spending up to a month studying before travelling around Peru. We had all clearly hit it off with our new families, though one of us is a bit alarmed at the

blue flame that jumps out of the shower switch in the morning, one of us has a long bus ride in to the school, and another is disconcerted to find that his host mother is actually six years younger than he is. We're all keen to meet our teachers and see which class we'll be joining, but after sitting the placement test, we learn that as it's not yet high season and the school is not too busy, tuition will be one-on-one. Although some find the prospect daunting, to my mind, this is a pretty impressive ratio – though even in high season the maximum class size swells to only four pupils.

49 As the week unfolds, I slip into a routine. Four hours of classes in the morning, back home for lunch, then afternoons free for sightseeing. Cusco will supply anything it can to lure the feckless student away from his or her homework. It's all too easy to swap verb conjugations for a swift beer in a bar, although it's at least three days before anybody plucks up the courage to suggest that maybe we don't have to go back to our respective families for dinner every night. Once the seed of rebellion has been planted we queue up like nervous teenagers outside the phone box plucking up the courage to ring our 'Mums' and ask if we can stay out late – all the more strange when you consider that our average age is probably thirty-three. But after one strangely unsatisfying restaurant meal, I decide that true authenticity is back home at the dinner table with Carmucha.

57 As the week wears on, a strange thing starts to happen: the dinner-table chatter, which at first was so much 'white noise', starts to have some meaning and, miraculously, I can follow the thread of the conversation. What's more, I've started to dream in Spanish!

Tip Strip

Question 1: The teacher succeeded in teaching her to do simple things, but why is the writer unhappy?

Question 5: What complaints do some of her classmates have?

Question 7: Read the next line carefully for a description of what a 'feckless' student would do.

- 1 How did the writer feel after her courses of evening classes?
 - A proud of what she'd learnt so far
 - B frustrated at her slow rate of progress
 - C critical of the attitude adopted by her teacher
 - D unable to perform simple tasks in the language

- 2 What put the writer off the idea of doing an 'immersion' course?
 - A having relatively little time to devote to it
 - B the thought of staying with a host family
 - C her own lack of fluency in the language
 - D the limited range of locations available

- 3 The word 'misgivings' (line 21) refers to the writer's
 - A reasons for choosing Peru for her trip.
 - B first impressions of the city of Cusco.
 - C plans to do more than learn the language.
 - D doubts about her decision to come on the trip.

- 4 How did the writer feel after the party she attended?
 - A upset that people assumed she could speak Spanish
 - B confident that she was beginning to make progress
 - C unsure how well she would cope during her stay
 - D worried that she may have seemed rude

- 5 What did the writer discover when she met her fellow students?
 - A Some were less happy with the arrangements than she was.
 - B They would all be studying together for a fixed period.
 - C Some were much older than the teachers at the school.
 - D They did not all like their host families.

- 6 The word 'daunting' (line 49) suggests that the writer's fellow students viewed one-to-one lessons as
 - A a disappointing change of plan.
 - B good value for money.
 - C an unexpected bonus.
 - D a difficult challenge.

- 7 A 'feckless' student (line 57) is one who
 - A plans study time carefully.
 - B is easily distracted from studying.
 - C completes all homework efficiently.
 - D balances study with other activities.

- 8 How did the writer feel when her fellow students suggested a night out together?
 - A embarrassed by their immaturity
 - B thinks her hosts are too rebellious
 - C amused by their behaviour
 - D unwilling to take part

Part 2

You are going to read an article about the use of robots. Seven sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A–H** the one which fits each gap (**9–15**). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

If you're happy, the robot knows it

Robots are gaining the ability to engage us emotionally, giving them a much broader range of uses.

RoCo, the world's first expressive computer, has a monitor for a head and a simple LCD screen for a face. Inhabiting a back room in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's media lab, RoCo has a double-jointed neck which allows it to shift the monitor up and down, tilt it forward and back, and move it from side to side.

9 When you hang your head and sink into your chair, RoCo tilts forward and drops low to almost touch the desk, mimicking your gloomy posture. When you perk up and straighten your back, it spots the change and cheerfully swings forward and upward.

RoCo was unveiled at a human-robot interaction conference in Washington DC in March 2007. Because it responds to a user's changes in posture, its creators hope people might be more likely to build up a relationship with the computer that will make sitting at a desk all day a little more enjoyable. **10**

The team is among a growing number of researchers who are investigating how far a robot's physical presence can influence people.

11 Researchers at Stanford University in California have already proved that an in-car assistance system, for example, can make us drive more carefully if the voice matches our mood. But robots can have a greater impact. 'If it can actually touch you, it's a lot more meaningful,'

says Cynthia Breazeal of the Media Lab, who created RoCo with her colleague Rosalind Picard.

Breazeal suggests that RoCo could be programmed to adopt the right posture to foster greater attention and persistence in children. **12** To find out, Aaron Powers at iRobot in Burlington, Massachusetts, and colleagues at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, invited volunteers to chat about health and happiness with a 1.3-metre-tall, talking humanoid robot called Pearl. They then compared their impressions with those of people who had only heard the robot and seen its projected image.

They found that volunteers rated the physical robot as more trustworthy, sociable, responsive, competent, respectful and lifelike than the projected image of the robot. More importantly, the researchers also found that the physical robot had the most influence over the volunteers.

13 This persuasive power is important and is already being put to use in the classroom. Hiroshi Ishiguro, a roboticist at Osaka University in Japan, has developed a remote-controlled robotic clone of himself called Germinoid-H1. **14** Interestingly, his students preferred this to a video or telephone link.

The emphasis is now on the improvement of teamwork and task coordination between humans and robots. But the idea of robots as team-mates is not universally accepted. **15** Breazeal argues that this can be resolved by training people and robots together, so that we learn the robot's limitations in advance. 'There might be initial disappointment, but five minutes later we will have figured it out,' she says.

Tip Strip

Question 9: The sentences after the gap describe the movements of the robot and of the user. Find a sentence that refers to them.

Question 12: The sentence after the gap begins with 'To find out'. Find out what?

Question 13: Find a sentence that proves that the physical robot 'had the most influence'.

- A** But does a physical robot really provoke a greater response in people than a much cheaper animated agent on a computer screen could?
- B** An attached camera can detect when the user changes position, allowing RoCo to adjust its posture accordingly.
- C** This does not mean that the robots of the future may be able to see things from our point of view and correct us when we make bad decisions.
- D** Using technology to manipulate someone or shape their mood is nothing new.
- E** Because robots have no drive to protect themselves, they cannot protect the group, says Victoria Groom, a researcher in human-robot interaction.
- F** The robot had actually prompted lots of participants to declare that they would take up more healthy activities, such as exercising and avoiding fatty foods.
- G** They also believe that by tuning into users' moods, the robot might help them to get their work done more effectively.
- H** Recently he has begun using it to represent him at meetings and classes at the Advanced Telecommunications Research Institute when he can't attend in person.

Part 3

You are going to read a magazine article about wild camping. For questions 16–30, choose from the people (A–D). The people may be chosen more than once.

- A Luis Gallivan
- B Anna Cresswell
- C Thomas Parsons
- D Jennie Martinez

Tip Strip

Question 16: Find a similar way of saying 'enjoys facing risks'.

Question 21: Find a similar way of saying 'unwilling to recommend'.

Question 27: Be careful! paragraph B refers to 'an accident', paragraph C refers to 'dangerous activities' and paragraph D refers to 'a disaster'. Which one is the correct answer here?

Which person

- enjoys the idea of facing some risks while camping? 16
- compares attitudes to wild camping now and in the past? 17
- mentions the inexpensive nature of wild camping? 18 19
- was forced by circumstances to share a camping experience? 20
- is unwilling to recommend areas suitable for wild camping? 21
- is pleased to have shown others how to enjoy camping? 22
- accepts that parents may be concerned about their children? 23
- refers to the need to travel light when wild camping? 24
- explains how a negative experience made her avoid camping for a while? 25
- says more people are beginning to see the attraction of wild camping? 26
- describes a dangerous situation which could have been avoided? 27
- says inexperienced campers should not go to remote places? 28
- gives reasons for disliking organised campsites? 29
- mentions being unable to do without certain comforts? 30

Luis Gallivan I'm turning my back on organised sites, particularly the supersized ones. Even at the relatively quiet sites you can seldom escape the constant chattering of people in neighbouring tents, or worse still, the noise of satellite-assisted televisions from camper vans. I go wild camping, which means I can set up my tent in a field or on a mountainside without paying anyone for the privilege. Lots of 'mild campers' (that's what we call the ones who use campsites) are waking up to the fact that wild camping gives you an eco-friendly break and offers a great deal more in the way of adventure. Because it's so different from 'mild' camping, though, people need to ask themselves: 'Do I really need this?' before packing their stuff. Wild camping is the ultimate budget holiday – once you've got to wherever you're going, the only expense is feeding yourself.

Anna Cresswell

My first experience of wild camping was a bit of an accident.

I'd trekked with a friend to a remote spot but we each had different plans. She wanted to stay the night in a tent, whilst

I was wanted to head back home before bedtime. As it happened, I was so exhausted that I ended up sharing the tiny uncomfortable tent with her. I must say the experience put me off wild camping for months, until I reminded myself that if I hadn't stayed, I'd never have witnessed that breathtaking sunset which more than made up for all the discomfort. Then there's the excitement that comes from making yourself slightly vulnerable: out in the wild with nobody watching over you. And I never have to book, if the weather's disappointing I don't go, if it turns cold I go home. This is as stress-free as holidays get. But I'm a bit fussy about taking everything I need, even if it means a heavier backpack: for example, I must have a folding chair, a thin self-inflating mattress and a pile of good books.

Thomas Parsons Perhaps the main reason why many people shy away from wild camping is our modern-day culture of 'risk aversion' – in other words, avoiding all activities that seem in any way dangerous, however unlikely it is that anything would actually go wrong. In less paranoid times, wild camping was indeed very common, but people nowadays want safe environments, especially when it comes to feeling at ease with what their kids are doing, and organised campsites are the obvious answer. I'm not keen to suggest good places to go wild camping, though, because one of the joys of the activity comes from finding places nobody else knows about. For the beginner, I'd advise places which aren't too far from civilisation in case anything does go wrong. I learnt the hard way, weighing myself down with unnecessary home comforts and camping gadgets when apart from the usual backpacker's tent, warm sleeping bag, spare clothes and food,

all you really need is a torch, lightweight cooking equipment, a map and a compass.

Jennie Martinez

Camping was an integral part of my early years, and I've managed to pass on some of my enthusiasm to my own children. In striving for little luxuries like hot showers, 'mild' campers miss out on the delights of wild camping. There are very comfortable state-of-the-art tents available nowadays if you want a bit of comfort, and they don't cost that much. Once you're hooked on wild camping, nothing else will do and you get not to mind occasional problems with ants or wasps. The lack of fellow travellers makes me feel that the great views and the starlit skies have been laid on expressly for my own personal enjoyment. But camping in wild places also means having to observe a few basic rules. For instance, during a particularly dry season, it's best to avoid high fire-risk areas. I'll always remember a time when I was camping with friends and we noticed that somebody had failed to extinguish a small fire completely. We managed to put it out, but it could have been a disaster.

Wild camping

Camping in the wild rather than at organised campsites is a great way of getting away from it all and getting back to nature. Four experienced wild campers tell us why.

You are going to read a magazine article about the Institute of Modern Music in Brighton (BIMM). For questions 1–8, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

The Brighton Institute of Modern Music, also known as BIMM, recently doubled in size with the opening of BIMM West. Jarvis Cocker, Kaiser Chiefs, the Young Knives and Scissor Sisters are among those who have addressed students, and various shaky *YouTube* clips exist of drum course members playing along with Chad Smith of the Red Hot Chili Peppers.

The original BIMM, now called BIMM East, opened in 2002, after Bruce Dickinson, guitarist with the Little Angels, often in the charts in the 1990s, decided to move from running the Academy of Contemporary Music in Guildford, and set up something closer to his own heart. 'We have a more specialist niche here: we're more band, more rock'n'roll oriented. Guildford's a really good school, but we don't do music IT here – we want the substance, we look after the band oriented people. We own it, and we set the culture, and that's great,' says Bruce.

Indeed, the streets of Brighton and Hove now throng with young people carrying guitar backpacks who are heading to classes. Courses range from one-year diplomas to BA honours degrees, with students specialising in guitar, bass, drums or vocals, or focussing on the touring and management end of things. While the strings and percussion departments are male-dominated, two-thirds of the singers are female.

'The biggest myth musicians have is that someone will wave a magic wand and sort out the business side. Bands who make it actually accept responsibility for all aspects of what goes on,' says Dickinson. So, no matter what the student's speciality, their courses will include business modules. The story of popular music is riddled with footnotes about artists being
40 ripped off by shiny-suited managers. They are the people who produce contracts that you
43 need a microscope to read and who retire to the Bahamas while their cash cows remain as poor as ever.

'There's a live performance workshop every week, for which students are given a song to learn,' says Jim Williams, head of the guitar department. 'You'd expect something heavy, by,

say, System of a Down to be the most popular track, but last year it was a Norah Jones song, really delicate, that people seemed to like the most. They were dreading it, but they were so pleased to get it right.'

Those weekly performances involve individuals from various disciplines being matched together, and that's how Floors and Walls became a unit last year, with singer Alex Adams hooking up with guitar, bass and drum contemporaries. 'I was into drum'n'bass and garage. Through some friends I heard about BIMM. As a singer, it's been fantastic: you learn technical exercises, warming up, keeping the voice healthy, the history of music, but the main thing for me is the live performance events. Learn a song, and then you're at a proper venue with a band. It's a place where you're all in the same boat, and it's competitive, but in a friendly way.'

The competition element peaks in the quest to appear on the annual compilation CD: last year, 160 demos were sent in by students hoping to make the final cut of twelve. The BIMM principal, Vaseema Hamilton, is particularly pleased when diploma students' tracks show up on the CD. 'Most of the students are full-time and from local schools,' she says. 'They are often
78 people who didn't really engage with school. You know they might end up quite disengaged from life otherwise, and it's great when they get on to the album and sound better than some of those from higher levels.'

Tutors, too, are on a learning curve. Members of staff undertake a two-year, part-time special teaching course at Sussex University. 'It's a bit like a football team here, with people fulfilling different roles,' says Dickinson. 'You've got your tutors who can transcribe the entire back catalogue of Frank Zappa, and then you've got your less academic but very vociferous types.'

91 There's a constant turnover, with many going on the road, on tour to all sorts of places. Students like that – it shows them the facts of life as a musician. One thing is clear to all who come to BIMM: it moves in its own way, and there is something quite magical about it.

Tip Strip

Question 2: What does Dickinson mean by 'We own it, and we set the culture'?

Question 5: What is 'the main thing' for Alex Adams?

Question 8: There is a constant turnover of what? Look at the previous line.

- 1 In the first paragraph, the writer mentions a number of famous artists in order to
 - A show that BIMM relies too much on big names.
 - B emphasise that BIMM is held in high regard.
 - C compare the artists' relative importance.
 - D win the support of BIMM students.
- 2 Bruce Dickinson likes his job at BIMM better than his previous job because he is now able to
 - A concentrate on training band leaders.
 - B attract students from other colleges.
 - C decide about the content of the courses.
 - D be amongst the best of the chart-toppers.
- 3 What does the expression 'ripped off' in line 40 mean?
 - A cheated
 - B attacked
 - C persuaded
 - D impressed
- 4 The words 'cash cows' in line 43 refer to
 - A managers.
 - B contracts.
 - C students.
 - D artists.
- 5 Alex Adams says that what he appreciates most about BIMM is
 - A the prestige of the degrees it awards.
 - B the opportunity to perform professionally.
 - C the mixture of styles it embraces.
 - D the way it looks after artists' well-being.
- 6 The BIMM principal, Vaseema Hamilton, uses the expression 'end up quite disengaged from life' (line 78) to indicate that some students
 - A come from broken homes.
 - B fail to appear on the BIMM CD.
 - C make more of an effort than others.
 - D need special support to succeed.
- 7 Dickinson compares BIMM to a football club to suggest that members of staff
 - A want to encourage healthy competition.
 - B like travelling to represent the college.
 - C take on a number of different roles.
 - D are very loyal to their institution.
- 8 The word 'many' in line 91 refers to
 - A tutors.
 - B facts.
 - C students.
 - D places.

You are going to read a magazine article about an African musician. Seven sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A–H** the one which fits each gap (**9–15**). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Femi Kuti, a great African musician

In the fashion-led world of pop culture, carrying a famous name is always a burden, as the offspring of musicians like John Lennon and Bob Marley have found. Yet the history of much of the world's music – certainly in Africa – is based on a long and deep tradition of passing on the torch from one generation to the next. Femi Kuti is the son of Fela Kuti, a renowned musician who died ten years ago.

Throughout his career, Femi Kuti has had to suffer comparisons with his father. You can't fill the boots of a legend and Fela Kuti was not only an extraordinary and innovative musician but one of the giants of world music. **9** He has kept alive the flame of Afro-beat as well as bringing his own unique creativity to its rhythms.

Femi was born in London in 1962, when his father was a student at the Royal Academy. Fela never showed his oldest son any signs of approval or encouragement. **10** Yet by the age of fifteen, Femi's impressive playing had earned him a place in his father's band, *Egypt 80*, on merit.

Femi didn't have to wait long for his first opportunity to head that band. In 1985, it had been booked to play at the Hollywood Bowl, but Femi's father failed to make it on to the plane. **11** This gave him the confidence he needed to start a band of his own.

In 1986, together with keyboard player Dele Sosimi, Femi left his father's band and formed the band *Positive Force*, resulting in tensions between father and son that were to last several years. **12** Now a collector's item, its mix of funk, soul and jazz, driven by thundering percussion, proved that he could stand on his own two feet.

Femi made his first US tour in 1995, which culminated in an acclaimed appearance at the Summer stage in New York's Central Park in July. The tour coincided with the release of his album, *Femi Kuti*, which earned him very good reviews across Europe and the US. **13** He finally admitted that his son had what it takes.

Though Femi remains resentful of what he sees as his father's lack of support early in his career, he recognises that he learnt things from him: '**14** ' says Femi. That individuality was certainly evident on his next album, *Shoki Shoki*, which added fresh flavours drawn from contemporary R&B and dance music.

His latest album, *Live at the Shrine*, was recorded in 2004 at the club in Lagos which remains the centre of his operations and where he continues to play every Sunday night when he's not on tour. And as we wait for his next album, the Kuti tradition continues and Femi's own son now plays alongside him in *Positive Force*. **15** Femi sounds proud of his son.

Tip Strip

Question 9: The sentence before the gap is full of praise for Femi Kuti's father. You need a sentence which links this to his son's successful career.

Question 11: What did Femi do when his father failed to turn up?

Question 13: The sentence after the gap refers to Femi's father. Sentences B, C, F and H mention his father. Which one is the correct answer?

- A** Femi stepped forward to fill his place, and did so, by all accounts, with considerable skill.
- B** It also won him six awards at Nigeria's Fame Music Awards and led at last to a reconciliation with his father.
- C** Yet his father's long shadow should not obscure the fact that Femi Kuti has developed into a fine performer in his own right.
- D** It was at this place that he helped to fund a variety of cultural, social and educational projects.
- E** Femi's debut album with the new band, *No Cause for Alarm?*, was recorded in Lagos and released on Polygram Nigeria in 1987.
- F** The one thing I learned from my father was to be true to myself, and that's the advice I've given my own child.
- G** After giving him a saxophone as a young boy, he then refused to give him any lessons.
- H** When I look at his life, it's very hard for me to be angry with him because he taught me to be different and to do things my own way.

Part 3

You are going to read a magazine article about people who have taken up dangerous sports. For questions 16–30, choose from the people (A–D). The people may be chosen more than once.

- A Brenda Gordon
- B Guy Stanton
- C Debbie Bridge
- D Max Wainright

Tip Strip

Question 18: Find a similar way of saying 'was confident'.

Question 22: Which person was told by a teacher not to do something?

Question 26: Find a similar way of saying a 'feeling of joy'.

Which person

- was aware of making a mistake during training? 16
- expected the first day of training to be relatively easy? 17
- was confident of having the physical strength to succeed? 18
- improved their performance by following some useful advice? 19
- realised their co-trainees had had some experience in a related sport? 20
- mentions having gained considerable confidence since starting? 21
- was warned not to try to use skills acquired in other sports? 22
- believes the training venue used is the best available? 23
- is confident of overcoming any feelings of fear? 24
- felt nervous when preparing to try out the sport for the first time? 25
- mentions the feeling of joy that the sport gave? 26
- was told the sport was not as dangerous as people think? 27
- was more successful than somebody else in a first attempt? 28
- felt disappointed when the trainer gave an order to stop? 29
- felt uncomfortable with their appearance on arriving for a lesson? 30

Anyone for extreme sports?

Tired of going to the gym? Why not try something you might actually enjoy? Four courageous people describe their own choices ...

Brenda Gordon: flying trapeze I wanted to do something where I was having so much fun I wouldn't even notice I was exercising at all. I decided to try out a half-day circus-skills course. It all started with a series of preparation exercises. Then I stood facing the flying trapeze, and all of a sudden I noticed a slight fluttering in my stomach. Next I was shown the right way to grip the trapeze and how to step off the platform without hitting my back. Then, suddenly, I was being counted down from three. My heart was racing but I kept thinking I'd no doubt be able to take my body weight in my very muscular arms. Then in a moment I'd stepped off and, incredibly, I was swinging through the air. I was aware of a real feeling of regret when the instructor told me to stop. That was a year ago, and I am now a fearless trapeze flyer, though my muscles still hurt after each and every session.

Guy Stanton: ice climbing I had my first ice-climbing lesson at an indoor climbing centre which has an enormous artificial ice cave. I turned up fully kitted-up in heavy climbing boots with sharp-toothed metal crampons, and armed with two metal ice axes, which was embarrassing as my co-trainees all expected to get their gear from the centre. The instructor ran through a demonstration. Then it was my turn. I buried the axes on the ice, kicked one boot at the wall, then the other, and started climbing. But I had forgotten my first important lesson: don't bury your axes too deep. As my desire not to fall increased, so I hammered them deeper until they got stuck. My arms were aching and I stopped, utterly disappointed with myself. The trainer shouted some encouragement: 'You can do it, don't grip the axes so hard!' I did so and my more relaxed style meant less pressure on my arms, so I

started enjoying it. I still feel frightened when I'm high up, but I know I'll feel completely at ease eventually.

Debbie Bridge: freediving Freediving is a sport which consists of diving to great depths without an oxygen tank. I took part in a freediving course organised by a leading sub-aqua website. This is surely the best place in the world to learn this skill. My training took place in a 30-metre high and 6-metre wide cylindrical water tank. Unlike me, who had never been deeper than the swimming-pool floor, my co-trainees were all scuba divers. Our trainer was keen to prove freediving is not so risky. 'When practised correctly, it is a very safe sport,' she said. After a few lectures about safety, and suitably kitted with flippers and a diving mask, I was ready to get into the water. With a partner, we were going to attempt to descend and ascend by pulling on a rope. My partner dived first but had trouble and stopped at 5 metres. Then I dived, pulling myself downwards on the rope and reached 15 metres easily, feeling more and more at ease. This sport is not about adrenaline but about being calm.

Max Wainright: snowboarding I'd always wanted to try snowboarding, so I went for a training day at an indoor snow slope near my home – a 170-metre-long slope, all covered by 1500 tonnes of man-made snow which is surprisingly like the real thing. Having had the pleasure of learning the basics of snowboarding several years before in the French Alps, I'd hoped that returning to the sport might be a bit like riding a bike, something you supposedly never forget. But it seemed that most of what I'd learned had melted away just like snow. I knew I shouldn't use the techniques I'd learnt in years of surfing and skiing, and I didn't. My instructor had said they were not applicable to snowboarding at all. I started riding slowly at first, and couldn't get the balance right. It took hours before I could pick up speed and successfully perform a neat turn. But I was getting the hang of this! What a thrill to feel the cool air rushing by, what fun to crash into the snow!

You are going to read an extract from a novel. For questions 1–8, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

I made a discovery on the way to Ruth's aunt's house in Spain. The things you worry about don't always turn out as badly as you expect. Sometimes they're worse. Everything would have been different if our plane had landed on schedule. Ruth was quite nice about it, as always, but I know that she really thought it was my fault.

Our plan had been to arrive in Spain, collect the hire car, shop for groceries and still get to the house in daylight. I'd felt proud of myself when I'd booked the tickets. I'd got a special cheap offer on the Internet. But that was silly because Ruth's aunt was paying our expenses and she wasn't the kind of woman who expects people to fly on budget airlines. To her mind, you pay full price for comfort and reliability. Our flight got to Spain about three hours later than expected.

By the time we got to where our hire car was waiting amongst dozens of others, it was totally dark. The man at the desk confirmed what we'd guessed. It was too late for shopping. While I signed for the car – gripping the pen hard so that my name wouldn't look as shaky as I felt – Ruth bought two cartons of fruit juice from a vending machine.

'Ruth!' I said, as I drove cautiously out of the car park, gripping the wheel. 'Which way is it? I'm not going to be able to understand any of the road signs!'

'You just need to follow the coast road,' said Ruth. 'It's simple. Things don't get tough until we take a left into the mountains.'

As all I had to do was drive straight ahead, I began to relax. Then it was time to turn off into the mountains and I un-relaxed again. Apart from anything else, you don't get street lighting on lonely country roads in southern Spain. This road climbed slowly but steadily in a series of Z-shapes, with a rocky wall on the left and a steep drop on the right. We gradually lost the rest of the traffic until there was hardly any. I can tell

you now that hardly any is worse than a lot. All would be quiet and then suddenly headlights would appear behind us, sweep past us and vanish. Or lights would blaze round a corner ahead, without warning, looking as though they were coming right at us.

Ruth read out where I should go, and me and the car went. It all made sense. Or it did until she pointed to an olive grove, all silvery in the moonlight, and told me to drive into it.

'I can't,' I said. 'There's no road.'

'There's a track,' said Ruth. 'Up ahead, see? On the left. It's right opposite a white house with green shutters, just like the directions say.'

I gave way. But I wasn't happy. 'This is not a track,' I said, driving cautiously onto it. 'It's just a strip of land where the olive trees aren't.' We bounced slowly along in silence, apart from the 62 scunching of pebbles under the wheels. Ahead was the dark outline of a small house.

'This is it,' said Ruth. 'See – we made it!'

The track opened out into a parking space beside the house. There it stopped – end of the road. 'Are you sure about this?' I whispered. 'It's really late, Ruth. If we're wrong we're going to wake people up.'

'There's no one to wake up,' said Ruth, getting out. 'The place is empty. Just waiting for us.' Somewhere in the distance, a dog barked.

Ruth was at the house. I could hear her scrabbling at the door. She turned as I reached her. 'I can't make the key work,' she said.

'I told you,' I breathed. 'We're in the wrong place.'

I went back to the car and got a torch. I thought it would show us how to put the key in. What it actually showed us was something quite different. The metal surrounding the keyhole was bright and shiny and all around it there were little marks and scratches in the old wood of the door. The lock had been changed. Very recently.

- 1 What does the narrator suggest about her trip in the first paragraph?
 - A She'd expected Ruth to share the blame for what happened.
 - B She'd expected Ruth to be angry with her.
 - C She'd expected aspects of it to go wrong.
 - D She'd expected her plane to be delayed.

- 2 What mistake did the narrator make when booking their flight?
 - A She hadn't followed Ruth's advice about the airline.
 - B She'd forgotten that someone else was paying for them.
 - C She'd chosen one that was scheduled to arrive after dark.
 - D She hadn't realised that they would need to go shopping on arrival.

- 3 How did the narrator feel in the car-hire office?
 - A keen not to let her nervous state show
 - B cross because she had to wait in a queue
 - C grateful for the advice of the man behind the desk
 - D confused by the documents that she needed to sign

- 4 'It' in line 33 refers to
 - A understanding the road signs.
 - B driving in the dark.
 - C taking a left turn.
 - D finding the way.

- 5 When driving into the mountains, the narrator felt
 - A reassured by the sound of passing traffic.
 - B alarmed by the sight of other car headlights.
 - C frustrated by their rather slow progress.
 - D unsure if they were on the right road.

- 6 How did Ruth know that they should turn into the olive grove?
 - A She was consulting a map.
 - B She had been there before.
 - C She had written instructions.
 - D She asked some local residents.

- 7 The word 'scrunching' in line 62 describes a type of
 - A plant.
 - B noise.
 - C movement.
 - D road surface.

- 8 Why couldn't the friends get into the house?
 - A The lock in the door was broken.
 - B They had brought the wrong keys.
 - C They had come to the wrong place.
 - D The keys they had didn't fit the lock.

You are going to read an extract from an article about a young designer. Seven sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A–H** the one which fits each gap (**9–15**). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Sparkling trainers

★ ☆ ★ ☆ ★ ☆ ★ ☆ ★ ☆

Pauline Clifford's hobby of decorating trainers has turned into a successful business.

Pauline's hobby of customising trainers by decorating them with Swarovski crystals has grown into a fashion phenomenon. Pauline's customers send her their shoes and she decorates them with their names, favourite song lyrics, flags, or one of her own colourful designs.

Pauline is in her twenties and turns out her shoe designs in a spare room at home in Neilston, a suburban village on the outskirts of Glasgow in Scotland – a place about as far away from the red carpets, paparazzi and the glamour of celebrity land as it is possible to imagine. **9**

Pauline's company, *StarSparkles*, was formed in April 2006. Now upmarket department stores and retail chains at the fashionable end of the market are stocking her pre-customised shoes. Pauline's success isn't entirely surprising because people are keen to buy something unique. **10** And that's precisely what Pauline is offering.

So how did it all start? 'I've always liked things that are a bit different and creative,' says Pauline. 'I used to dress a bit strangely when I was growing up and I began customising things as a teenager. But it really started a couple of years back, when I bought a load of Swarovski crystals on a trip to Los Angeles. When I came back I customised some Adidas and Puma

trainers.' **11** Pauline soon found herself spending all her spare time on her shoe project.

'I also emailed lots of magazines to see if they wanted to feature my shoes, and a lot of them did,' Pauline adds. Also, as she is a bit celebrity-obsessed, she found a website called *Contact Any Celebrity*, chose a few well-known people in Los Angeles, found out their shoe sizes and designed them each a pair of trainers.

'**12** It was amazing.'

As the orders continued to flood in, Pauline decided to put her business on a more formal footing.

13 Pauline says: 'After I had officially been in business for about six months, I went to the Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust. They were pretty supportive and they gave me £5000, which I used to get my website up and running, get some business cards and buy a stock of crystals.'

Pauline is negotiating to buy a stock of shoes to work on and sell internationally through her website, but she is slightly uneasy. **14** 'Some people started selling trainers similar to mine, so I had to pay for a lawyer to stop them. What I really want to do is to build up a brand name for myself, so that if anybody tries to copy me, my brand will be seen as the original and best,' she says.

'**15** But I never get bored. I definitely will have to employ someone soon – there's only so many shoes I can do. Everyone asks me if I'm not getting a bit fed up. But I love to see customers' faces when I show them their shoes. It makes me really happy, that's the best thing about it.'

- A** A shoe-shop manager in Glasgow saw them and ordered a few pairs to put in the shop window, and they sold straightaway.
- B** But who do you turn to for help when you've got a rapidly expanding enterprise on your hands and no experience of running a company?
- C** The well-known shops have become so like one another that it's almost impossible for the style-conscious shoe shopper to take home something that nobody else has got.
- D** But it was the Business Gateway organisation which helped her to draw up a business plan.
- E** As is the case with so many new businesses, someone else pinching and using her idea is a worry.
- F** It's an appropriate setting, however, for someone making their mark in footwear, because in the nineteenth century it was home to a thriving shoe industry.
- G** Sometimes when I'm getting behind with individual customer orders, I do get a bit stressed.
- H** One of them – who's a bit of a fashion icon – was photographed wearing theirs the following week, and I just couldn't believe my luck!

Part 3

You are going to read a magazine article about people who work in the tourist industry. For questions 16–30, choose from the people (A–E). The people may be chosen more than once.

- A Claire Davies
- B Peter Gattoni
- C Maria Falcon
- D Patrick O'Connor
- E Connie Ferguson

Which person

- | | | |
|--|----|----------------------|
| refers to a lack of outstanding professionals in one area of work? | 16 | <input type="text"/> |
| stresses the need to provide clients with a balance between freedom and control? | 17 | <input type="text"/> |
| regrets a decision made years ago? | 18 | <input type="text"/> |
| mentions the need to take the right decisions under pressure? | 19 | <input type="text"/> |
| says people shouldn't feel discouraged if they don't earn much at first? | 20 | <input type="text"/> |
| gained promotion after impressing a senior colleague? | 21 | <input type="text"/> |
| says larger companies are able to offer better conditions to workers? | 22 | <input type="text"/> |
| believes that qualifications alone won't get you promotion? | 23 | <input type="text"/> |
| remembers making a mistake whilst doing the job? | 24 | <input type="text"/> |
| has been able to combine work with further study? | 26 | <input type="text"/> |
| looks forward to developing a new career? | 28 | <input type="text"/> |
| says there are likely to be more opportunities for training in the future? | 29 | <input type="text"/> |
| warns about the decreasing opportunities for jobs in one area? | 30 | <input type="text"/> |

Thinking of a career in tourism?

The tourist industry offers a range of jobs and career opportunities. So what sort of person do you need to be to work in tourism? To begin with, you need to like people and enjoy the challenge of working in a customer focussed environment.

Claire Davies is twenty-one and is a receptionist in a five-star hotel. She says that what appeals to her most is the diversity of the challenges she faces every day – from dealing with phone calls in different languages to making bookings for restaurants. She first came to the hotel when she was on a year's work experience from university and now works part-time, which allows her to continue with her degree course in management. Her advice to anyone considering a career in hotels is not to be put off by the thought of low wages at the start. Having the right degree or diploma is no guarantee of promotion, but the right attitude and good communication skills will get you a long way.

But of course it's not just about hotels. **Peter Gattoni** is a chef in an Italian restaurant that attracts what is called the 'gourmet tourist', whose holiday is never complete without the opportunity to try out the latest dishes. Peter went straight into employment after school, but that's not something he'd recommend. 'Had I taken a full-time college course as my parents wanted, I would have made faster progress. There's a shortage of first-class chefs, so many companies are now advertising good salaries, including profit-related pay, to chefs with the right qualifications and experience, though these advantages are more likely to come from the big-name restaurants and hotel chains.'

And what about a job as a tour guide? If you enjoy communicating with large groups of people, as **Maria Falcon** does, it's a great job. Maria accompanies groups of holidaymakers on package tours. She knows she plays a central role in ensuring that people enjoy their holiday by providing them with practical

support and information throughout the trip. 'It is important to allow people to do what they want, while at the same time making sure everybody is back on the minibus by the agreed time. And you must know the history of places you visit really well. Years back, I was embarrassed when a holidaymaker spotted some incorrect details in a commentary I was giving. Since then I've managed to attend regular local history classes to make sure it doesn't happen again.'

If the work of a tour guide seems a bit tame, **Patrick O'Connor** says that the job of adventure travel guide certainly offers excitement. Patrick leads trips to exotic locations around the globe, and he's quick to remind us that you need experience in a range of adventurous disciplines. 'People on these holidays are doing potentially dangerous activities, such as kayaking or diving. It's crucial to be able to exercise good judgment in difficult situations and be resourceful when dealing with the emergencies that are bound to arise. Once, I forgot to give somebody a life jacket and it could've been serious. This is a relatively new career, so educational institutions are only just beginning to offer programmes and qualifications.'

If you're thinking of becoming a travel agent, **Connie Ferguson** says you may want to give this career choice a little more thought. 'The job outlook isn't good right now because of the Internet. It's become much easier for people to make their own travel arrangements, though many people still need the advice of a travel professional.' Unlike other tourist jobs, you're based in an office, but you may get the opportunity to visit some destinations to evaluate the facilities on offer. Connie started by working as a reservations clerk in the travel agency, but the manager soon realised she had the skills to become a travel agent. 'Clients are well-informed and expect expert advice. I'm hoping to be able to start my own online travel business soon.'

Tourism offers something for everyone, with varying degrees of responsibility. The nature of the job varies from working on a ski slope to developing marketing strategies to preparing gourmet meals. But for all tourism jobs you need to be adaptable, enjoy problem-solving and think on your feet.

You are going to read an article about celebrity assistants. For questions 1–8, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

ASSISTANTS TO THE STARS

It stands to reason that a city like Los Angeles, which is home to so many of the famous and the semi-famous, would have an Association of Celebrity Personal Assistants (ACPA). The organisation

describes personal assistants as ‘multitasking’, as ‘possessing the most resourceful, creative, insightful, and results-driven abilities.’

When I first got in touch with Josef Csongei, the organisation’s president, he was initially reluctant to talk to me because I was a journalist. As he sees it, celebrity personal assistants have not always been treated fairly by the press. But despite this, and all the hard work and lack of appreciation that can come with this line of work, he explained, the jobs were still widely sought after. He noted that people regularly travelled great distances to attend a seminar titled ‘Becoming a Celebrity
21 Personal Assistant’, run by the ACPA. To prove his point, he told me about Dean Johnson. In the coming weeks, I heard this story from a number of assistants, including Johnson himself, and every time it left me baffled.

The story begins one night in September 1994, with Dean Johnson sitting at home in Columbia, South Carolina. Johnson is a single, 32-year-old business executive in charge of marketing and advertising at a sizeable company in the healthcare industry. It is 11 pm and he’s looking to unwind in front of the television after a long day’s work. A repeat of a talk show appears on the screen, and the host introduces her four guests: the celebrity personal assistants for Whoopi Goldberg, Roseanne Barr, Burt Reynolds and Carol Burnett. As these assistants talk about flying on private jets and attending Hollywood parties, Johnson reaches for a pen and starts taking notes. Without wasting another minute, he picks up the phone, calls directory enquiries in Los Angeles, and asks for the home phone numbers of the four assistants on the show.

Only one of them is listed: Ron Holder, who works for Whoopi Goldberg. Johnson dials his

number, and a minute later Holder picks up the phone. ‘He said I was very lucky to get through,’ Johnson told me. ‘Apparently, in the three months since he had appeared on that talk show,

he had received about 200 phone calls from people like me. He was in the process of disconnecting his phone, but he was nice enough to chat with me for a while.’ During their conversation, Holder told Johnson that he should consider attending the ‘Becoming a Celebrity Personal Assistant’ seminar in Los Angeles.

For someone like Johnson, with almost no connections in the industry, the notion of moving out to Los Angeles to become a celebrity personal assistant, something he did two months later, was extremely courageous – there’s no denying that. The typical American story of the guy in the remote provinces who falls in love with the glamour of the silver screen, packs up all his possessions and moves out to Hollywood to become a star is almost a century old. But Johnson’s story offered a new twist: he moved out to Hollywood to become an assistant to a star.

Of the thousands of people who work in Hollywood: agents, lawyers, stylists, publicists, business managers and others, many hope to rub shoulders with the biggest stars. What’s unique about celebrity personal assistants is that such proximity
77 appears to be the only perk their profession offers. Most describe the bulk of their work as drudgery: doing laundry, fetching groceries, paying bills. Assistants typically make about \$56,000 a year – hardly a fortune by Hollywood standards, especially given the round-the-clock obligations they often have. What’s more, the job is rarely a stepping stone to fame: celebrity personal assistants are, on average, aged about 38, right in the middle of their professional lives, and most of the ones I met described their line of work as a lifelong profession. For them, being an assistant was not the means to an end but an end in itself.

- 1 When the writer first contacted him, Josef Csongei was
- A angry about something she had written.
 - B suspicious of her because of her profession.
 - C surprised that she was interested in his organisation.
 - D pleased that she recognised the importance of assistants.
- 2 The phrase 'to prove his point' (line 21) refers to Csongei's belief that celebrity assistants
- A enjoy travelling as part of the job.
 - B are not given the appreciation they deserve.
 - C do a job that many other people would like to do.
 - D need to do a course before they start looking for work.
- 3 At the beginning of the story about Dean Johnson, we learn that
- A he had turned on the television in order to relax.
 - B he was dissatisfied with the work he was doing.
 - C he had always wanted to work in the film industry.
 - D he often watched television programmes about celebrities.
- 4 What was Dean's immediate reaction to what he saw on the programme?
- A He wrote down the contact details of the four interviewees.
 - B He decided which of the four interviewees he wanted to talk to.
 - C He started making enquiries about how to find the people on the show.
 - D He read through his notes carefully before getting in touch with anyone.
- 5 How did Ron Holder respond to Dean's phone call?
- A He refused to enter into a long conversation with Dean.
 - B He was angry that anyone had been able to get his number.
 - C He complained about being disturbed on his home number.
 - D He was willing to give Dean some advice and information.
- 6 In the fifth paragraph, the writer suggests that Dean Johnson
- A never achieved his aim of becoming a personal assistant.
 - B was brave to go and look for a new career in Los Angeles.
 - C really wanted to become a star rather than a personal assistant.
 - D lived to regret his decision to give up everything in his old life.
- 7 What does the word 'perk' (line 77) mean?
- A extra work required by a job
 - B something unexpected in a job
 - C a benefit of doing a particular job
 - D an unpleasant job that has to be done
- 8 In the final paragraph, we learn that celebrity assistants
- A tend to see the job as their career goal.
 - B are relatively well paid for what they do.
 - C find the job gets too demanding as they get older.
 - D often move into other aspects of the film industry.

Part 2

You are going to read a magazine article about two islands. Seven sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A–H** the one which fits each gap (**9–15**). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Cayman Brac and Little Cayman

Few destinations feel further from life in the twenty-first century than Cayman Brac and Little Cayman – the less well-known sister islands of Grand Cayman in the Caribbean. A stay on one – or both – is the perfect tonic for anyone who is tired, stressed and in need of a proper break.

It's not all about relaxing in the sun, though, and lovers of the outdoors will be in their element.

9 The Cayman Islands form one of the world's top three dive destinations and divers flock from all corners of the world to explore their waters.

The range of marine life is so phenomenal that a large part of the *The Blue Planet* television series was filmed here. Those seeking a once-in-a-lifetime underwater experience can stop in the Cayman Islands and book a trip in a submarine that takes them down 300 metres to discover weird and wonderful creatures rarely seen nearer the surface.

10

Although Cayman Brac and Little Cayman have fundamental similarities, they are quite different in geography and atmosphere. Little Cayman is not really built up apart from a few small hotels, a couple of very good local restaurants and a quirky museum. **11**

It goes without saying that the diving around Little Cayman is excellent. An extra draw is the coral reef called the Bloody Bay Wall. **12** Here, amid

the wall's colourful coral, divers will find butterfly fish, angelfish and bonefish. If they are lucky, a turtle or two will swim lazily past. Even if you don't dive, there is so much to see just below the surface that snorkelling is fascinating enough.

But Little Cayman is not just about the sea.

13 Its wonderfully varied natural environment is best seen by exploring the island by bike. All in all, Little Cayman has a unique appeal. Who could fail to be charmed by an island where the fire engine is bigger than the airport building, and where iguanas have right of way on the road?

Cayman Brac, although not much bigger, is quite different. **14** The locals are friendly people who love to chat, each one with their own fascinating story to tell.

The landscape in Cayman Brac is also surprisingly hilly, with dense woodland, secret caves and a vertical cliff that rises fifty metres on the east side of the island.

This diverse scenery has created a unique natural habitat that can be explored by walking the eight miles of public footpaths and hiking trails. Cayman Brac is a natural stopping-off point for migrating birds. **15** Great fishing opportunities and a selection of excellent hotels complete the picture.

Whether you want to explore the underwater world or keep your head above water, a holiday on either Cayman Brac or Little Cayman is guaranteed to leave you feeling as good as new. These laid-back islands will capture your imagination like few other places on earth ever could.

- A** It starts at 7 metres deep and suddenly plunges to a staggering 2000 metres.
- B** As well as these visitors, it is also home to nearly 200 resident species, including an endangered parrot.
- C** This should not be a problem as there are now at least two airlines which fly to the islands regularly.
- D** Back on land, there is more nature to be discovered.
- E** They will love the walking and the cycling, and in particular the wonderful opportunities for diving and snorkelling.
- F** It is this lack of development that attracts visitors to its shores year after year.
- G** With roughly 1600 inhabitants to its neighbour's 120, it is much livelier.
- H** More people have travelled in space than have been down this far into the depths of the sea.

Part 3

You are going to read a magazine article about bookshop managers. For questions 16–30, choose from the people (A–D). The people may be chosen more than once.

- A Mandy Stocks
- B Andrew Welson
- C Jane Harvard
- D James Darry

Which bookshop manager

- mentions a way of adapting to survive in the age of the Internet?
- believes the shop has another function apart from the selling of books?
- is unsure about the amount of money the bookshop makes?
- believes customers are attracted by the way the books are displayed?
- changed their mind about the chosen location of the bookshop?
- is prepared to reduce the price of some books?
- is doubtful about being able to obtain the funds needed to expand?
- spent some time finding out information before opening the shop?
- is critical of the customer service offered by some bookshops?
- explains why a previous job was given up?
- is proud of the shop's stock of books for the very young?
- mentions a link between customers' occupations and their choice of books?
- has some knowledge about the contents of all the books on sale?
- is able to organise cultural events on the premises?
- mentions the fact that local people prefer the shop to larger ones?

The bestsellers

Do you buy books on the internet or in bookshops?

Dan Branson visits four successful bookshop managers ...

Mandy Stocks: Saville Books This shop is small and beautiful and it does not stock bestsellers, preferring to promote less well-known young authors. The children's section demonstrates the difference in philosophy between this and most other shops. 'We carry a vast range of books that reflect reality,' says Mandy. 'The vast majority of bookshops don't show children the world the way it is.' You could question the need to have CDs, tapes and so many other products in a bookshop, but Mandy says her bookshop would be incomplete without them. 'This shop is also an information centre,' she says. There are some much bigger bookshops in the area, but Mandy says buyers from the area are loyal and realise that her shop offers them a better service. Earlier this month, *Saville Books* was named Bookseller of the Year in recognition of the effort and imagination that Mandy has put into the shop. Mandy would like to enlarge the shop. 'It'll be hard to find somebody willing to invest money in it,' she says.

Andrew Welson: Lonestar Bookshop

Andrew is a very experienced bookseller. He ran a second-hand bookshop for several years until the need to increase his income made him apply for a position as manager of *Lonestar*. 'There is a huge disparity in quality among large bookshops,' he says. 'The best are very good, but others aren't, because the people who are at the face of helping the customer don't feel they are valued and the managers tend not to have a history of bookselling. You need to be passionate about the things you are selling.' The shop is modern and stylish. 'We only have a certain amount of space and what we are trying to do is stock the kind of books that our customers – mostly university students and young professionals – come to this shop for. But I also stock the popular books everyone's talking about, like *The Da Vinci Code*, for example.' Andrew gives a

lot of attention to making his shop window eye-catching and interesting. 'It is incredibly important,' he says.

Jane Harvard: Brunswick Bookshop Jane opened the *Brunswick Bookshop* last November, and it's the sort of place that captivates you as you go through the door. She says she is doing 'fantastically', though she admits she does not know how fantastically because her accountant has not finished calculating her profits. Jane has been in bookselling at three different shops, for fifteen years, and last year she decided to take the plunge and set up on her own. She was planning to open a shop in a fashionable part of the city, but then discovered a less well-off market area. 'The moment I saw it I knew it was right because it's a community street. I came and sat in the cafés and listened to conversations to see what kind of people lived here. They were well educated but didn't necessarily have much money.' Everything in her shop Jane wants to read herself. 'Obviously you don't have time to read them all, but I've got a pretty good idea of what's in most of them,' she says.

James Darry: Darry Books *Darry Books* is light, airy, modern and welcoming. It's got a strong children's section, a coffee bar, and also a space upstairs for author talks and presentations of new books. James is a former school head and left his job to start the bookshop. Why did he do it? 'I was having a conversation with a colleague one day, about what we could have done instead of teaching, and I said I would have had a bookshop. I realised I wanted a change. A year later I opened this shop, but it hasn't been easy. The competition from larger chains of bookshops is horrendous, so I offer lots of discounts, but not on a good-quality book that might be bought as a gift.' James has four full-time employees. 'We treat bookselling as a proper career and the staff are motivated, interested and well paid. Nowadays, you can buy any book on websites, the book trade is changing fast and we have to change with it, by offering customers that special personal touch.'