

READING

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- 6 CULTURE
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TASK (6 points)

Read the text below. For tasks 1–6 choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D). Circle out letters A, B, C or D. For each correct answer you get 1 point.

CULTURE CORNER

Hurling – a uniquely Irish game

Although it may look like an ordinary game, hurling has a very special meaning to Irish people: it is a symbol of their national identity and character. It is also the country's favourite hobby.

Hurling is often compared to field hockey. However, this analogy would be only partially true. Apart from the fact that both games involve a stick and a ball, it is hard to notice any other similarity. Surprisingly enough, hurling has in fact a lot to do with such sports as football and rugby, especially when you see what the players are allowed to do with the ball.

Hurling is played with fifteen players on each side on a field larger than a football pitch. The aim of the game is to hit a small ball called a sliotar with a wooden stick called a hurley in such a way that it goes into the opponents' goal or above it. If the ball goes around the goalkeeper and lands between two goalposts, in the net, you score three points; hitting the ball over the goal (but it must be between the H-shaped goalpost) gives you one point. An average score would be about 22-18 over 70 minutes of the game's official time.

Players are allowed to hit the ball not only when it is on the ground, but also when it is high in the air. They can also catch the ball in their hand (in which case they can carry it for not more than three steps), kick it or even hit it with an open hand. A player who wants to carry the ball for more than three steps, has to balance the sliotar on the end of the hurley while running. When performed at full speed, this last trick can look really impressive.

The fast pace of the game combined with the rule allowing the players to strike the ball above head height mean there is a high risk of injury. This is why since 2010 all players have had to wear a protective helmet. Given the long history of the game, the regulation seems to have come quite late. The reason for this is the general opinion about the game among the Irish: hurling is a hard game but it must be played fairly and with respect for the other players. No exceptions are made to this rule, no matter if it is the hurling played by youth leagues or the women's version of hurling (called camogie): in both cases, the game is as hard as that in the regular men's leagues and similar safety policies must be followed. The only difference is the size of the field and the weight and size of the equipment.

What is really surprising about hurling is the fact that although the game enjoys great popularity, it has remained purely amateur. Most players have regular jobs and do not receive any money for their performance unless they become team managers. Also, most games are either free or the entry fee is minimal.

There is no doubt that hurling is a unique sport in many ways. It is also uniquely Irish, as it reflects typical Irish values: hard work, fair play and the importance of the community.

1. Hurling and field hockey

- A. are very similar.
- B. have something in common.
- C. should never be compared.
- D. involve totally different equipment.

2. You score more points if you

- A. hit the *sliotar* over the goal.
- B. hit the *hurley* over the goal.
- C. hit the *sliotar* into the net.
- D. hit the *hurley* into the net.

3. The players are **NOT** allowed to

- A. hit the ball when it is on the ground.
- B. balance the ball on the end of the stick.
- C. carry the ball in their hands.
- D. take too many steps with the ball in their hands.

4. Protective helmets

- A. were for a long time seen as unnecessary.
- B. have a long tradition in hurling.
- C. came too late.
- D. have never been worn in hurling.

5. Women's hurling

- A. is harder than men's hurling.
- B. is safer than men's hurling.
- C. follows the same rules as men's hurling.
- D. involves exactly the same equipment as men's hurling.

6. Hurling is a unique sport because

- A. it enjoys great popularity.
- B. the players haven't turned professional.
- C. team managers don't receive any money.
- D. all games are free.

TASK (6 points)

Read the text below. For tasks 1–6 choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D). Circle out letters A, B, C or D. For each correct answer you get 1 point.

NEW ZEALAND HEROES

The world's greatest polyglot

Harold Williams is considered to be the world's greatest polyglot. He was listed in the Guinness Book of Records as the only person who could speak as many as fifty-eight languages fluently.

Williams was born in 1876 in New Zealand. From an early age, his father – a well-educated pastor – trained him in Latin and Ancient Greek. However, like most people his age, Harold was not very keen on studying. It was only at the age of seven when he experienced a strange sensation, which he later described as 'an explosion in his brain', which radically changed his attitude to learning. From that time on, his capacity to learn grew to an extraordinary degree. It affected languages in particular.

He continued studying Latin while at the same time hungrily acquired other languages. As a schoolboy he constructed a grammar and vocabulary of the New Guinea language called Douban based only on a copy of a gospel written in that language. Young Harold spent his pocket money on buying New Testaments in as many languages as he could. By the end of his life he had studied the Bible in twenty-six languages.

Before attending high school, he had managed to teach himself Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Maori, Samoan, Tongan, Fijian and other Polynesian dialects.

Harold continued his education up to university level but his first attempt was unsuccessful, as he failed mathematics at Auckland University. He listened to his father's advice and became a pastor himself at the age of twenty. It was then that he picked up Polish and Russian.

Inspired by his fascination with the Russian writer Leo Tolstoy, Williams decided to set off to Europe to visit the home of the famous writer. However, before going to Russia, he first went to Germany to continue his university education. Harold studied philology, ethnology, philosophy, history and literature and in 1903 gained his PhD in languages. These years as a student were marked by poverty. Harold's grant from New Zealand had quickly run out and he was forced to sell his books and the prizes he had won at school. He also taught English part-time to earn some money.

As a result of his study of Slavic languages, Williams became interested in Russia. He quickly started his career as a journalist and soon established himself as an authority on Russian affairs. By 1914 he was already living in Russia. Supposedly, he knew Russian grammar much better than most of his Russian friends. During this time he also learnt Finnish, Latvian, Estonian, Georgian and Tartar.

The outbreak of the Russian Revolution forced Williams to leave Russia. He arrived in Britain where for some time he worked for the British government. At that time he taught himself Japanese, Old Irish, Tagalog, Hungarian, Czech, Coptic, Egyptian, Hittite, Albanian, Basque and Chinese. He mastered a book of 12,000 Chinese Mandarin characters.

Despite a vast knowledge of languages and his great experience in journalism, Williams was unemployed for a few years. In 1921 his luck changed and he was offered a job in The Times. He held the position of foreign editor until his early death in 1928.

William's incredible gift for languages is still a mystery. He still holds the title of the world's greatest polyglot.

1. **Before he turned seven, Harold**
 - A. had not enjoyed learning new things.
 - B. had not studied anything.
 - C. had had strange sensations.
 - D. had not known any Latin or Greek.

2. **When he turned seven, Harold**
 - A. stopped studying Latin.
 - B. discovered his unusual talent.
 - C. could read the Bible in twenty-six languages.
 - D. spent his pocket money on buying gospels.

3. **Harold went to Europe because he wanted to**
 - A. visit Germany.
 - B. become a pastor.
 - C. become a famous writer.
 - D. visit Russia.

4. **According to the article, when he was a student in Germany, Harold**
 - A. worked as a book seller.
 - B. studied more than one subject.
 - C. taught more than one language.
 - D. regularly received money from New Zealand.

5. **Harold's knowledge of Russia**
 - A. was a result of his study of Finnish.
 - B. guaranteed him a job as a journalist.
 - C. was better than that of his friends.
 - D. was highly valued by others.

6. **Although Harold knew so many languages, he**
 - A. never had any luck in his life.
 - B. did not have any experience in journalism.
 - C. could not find work for some time.
 - D. was unemployed until 1928.

TASK (6 points)

Read the text below. For tasks 1–6 choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D). Circle out letters A, B, C or D. For each correct answer you get 1 point.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CHOCOLATE

We tend to think of chocolate as a sweet created during modern times. But chocolate actually dates back to the ancient peoples of Mesoamerica who enjoyed it as a bitter drink.

The tasty secret of the cacao tree, which chocolate is made from, was discovered 2,000 years ago in the tropical rainforests of the Americas.

The first people who made chocolate were the ancient cultures of Mexico and Central America. These people, including the Maya and Aztec, mixed ground cacao seeds with various spices to make a hot, bitter drink.

The drink was considered so precious that it was initially intended only for the most important people in society: rulers, priests, decorated soldiers and honoured merchants. Chocolate also played a special role in both Maya and Aztec royal and religious events: priests presented cacao seeds as offerings to the gods and served chocolate drinks during sacred ceremonies.

Europe's first contact with chocolate came during the conquest of Mexico in 1521. The Spanish recognised the value attached to cacao and followed the Aztec custom of drinking chocolate. Soon afterwards, the Spanish began to transport cacao seeds back home. Slowly they started adding cinnamon and other spices to it and began sweetening it with sugar. They managed to keep their delicious drink a Spanish secret for almost 100 years before the rest of Europe discovered what they were missing. Sweetened chocolate soon became extremely popular.

Because cacao and sugar were expensive imports, only those with money could afford to drink chocolate. In fact, in France, chocolate

was a state monopoly that could be consumed only by the aristocracy. Like the Maya and the Aztecs, Europeans developed their own special protocol for the drinking of chocolate. They even designed special porcelain and silver serving sets for chocolate that acted as symbols of wealth and power.

For centuries, chocolate remained a handmade luxury, drunk only by society's upper classes. But by the 1800s, mass production had made it affordable to a much broader public: the steam engine made it possible to grind cacao and to produce large amounts of chocolate cheaply and quickly. Later inventions like the cocoa press made it possible to create smooth, creamy, solid chocolate for eating—not just liquid chocolate for drinking.

New processes and machinery have improved the quality of chocolate and the speed at which it can be produced. However, cacao farming itself remains basically unchanged. People grow cacao in equatorial climates all around the world today using traditional techniques first developed in Mesoamerica: cacao is still harvested, fermented, dried, cleaned, and roasted mostly by hand. Today, additional steps in the processing of cacao have helped to create a variety of new flavours and forms. One thing has not changed, though: chocolate still remains people's favourite sweet. As someone nicely put it: 'I could give up chocolate but I'm not a quitter!'

Adapted from www.fieldmuseum.org

1. **Chocolate was discovered**
 - A. during modern times.
 - B. almost a thousand years ago.
 - C. outside Mesoamerica.
 - D. by peoples living in rainforests.
2. **During the Maya and Aztec civilisations, chocolate was**
 - A. not given to everyone.
 - B. more important than religious events.
 - C. served with cinnamon.
 - D. served both as a sweet and a bitter drink.
3. **In the hundred years after chocolate was taken to Spain**
 - A. no changes were made to the customs.
 - B. it started to be eaten as well as drunk.
 - C. the Spanish exported it to Mexico.
 - D. they experimented with its flavour.
4. **In Europe chocolate was at first only consumed by certain people because**
 - A. it was expensive.
 - B. the flavour was unpopular.
 - C. all the aristocracy were in France.
 - D. it was difficult to transport.
5. **New technologies have led to**
 - A. a revolution in the way cacao is farmed.
 - B. chocolate becoming more easily available.
 - C. chocolate becoming more expensive.
 - D. chocolate no longer being available as a drink.
6. **One thing about chocolate that hasn't changed until today is that**
 - A. there are as many flavours and forms as before.
 - B. more people give up on it more often.
 - C. it is loved by many.
 - D. it follows the same production process.

TASK (8 points)

Read about the lease of flats. For each task (1–8) choose the corresponding variant (A–E). Write down the letter into the table. Each letter can be used more than once. For each correct answer you get 1 point.

A

**£880 per month,
Waterloo and London Bridge**

Amazing two bedroom flat in Waterloo area. Fully furnished. All city centre attractions (bars, restaurants and shops) within walking distance. Large modern living room, high speed wireless broadband and fully fitted kitchen. Bedroom gets lots of light. King-size bed with plenty of storage space. Modern bathroom. Recently decorated. Underground garage available.

C

**£200 per month,
Winchmore Hill,
North London**

Very nice unfurnished one-bedroom flat in Winchmore Hill recently available. First floor. Plenty of storage place. You have your own kitchen, bathroom and dining room. Newly decorated. Internet included in the rent. Landline phone calls not included. A 10-minute walk to Winchmore Hill station.

B

£320 per month, Lewisham, South London

Single room available in a furnished flat with a comfortable living room with broadband and TV. The kitchen and bathroom are shared. Hidden from the main road. A 5-minute walk to St. John's station. Shops and supermarkets also within easy walking distance. Rent includes water, gas and electricity.

D

**£600 per month,
Muswell Hill,
North London**

Furnished two-bedroom flat on third floor in a quiet street in Muswell Hill. Convenient public transport connections to the city centre. Includes large living room with beautiful spacious balcony with plenty of room for dining outside. Bedroom with fitted wardrobe. Bathroom with shower. Free parking available. No extra charges.

E

**£670 per month, Greenwich,
South London**

Fully furnished two bedroom flat close to Greenwich University is available for rent. Only 7 minutes away from the Jubilee Line (North Greenwich Station), local bus services to the city centre. Secure building, video phone entry with porter. Luxury bathroom with bathtub/shower and heated floor. Both off-street parking and garage available.

1.	You need to have some furniture of your own.	
2.	You can feel very safe in your flat.	
3.	You will not have your own bathroom.	
4.	You can eat in the fresh air.	
5.	You will have a luxurious bedroom.	
6.	You can choose between two places to keep your car.	
7.	You do not have to use public transport to get to the city centre.	
8.	You have to pay extra for one thing.	

TASK (8 points)

Read information about London markets. For each task (1–8) choose the corresponding variant (A–E). Write down the letter into the table. Each letter can be used more than once. For each correct answer you get 1 point.

UK VISITOR GUIDE ▶ London ▶ Markets

LONDON MARKETS

Without its lively and colourful markets, London would lose a lot of its charm. Make sure you find time during your stay in England’s capital to have a walk around one of these fabulous places.

A BOROUGH MARKET

Located in South East London, it is one of the largest food markets in the world. It sells a wide variety of fresh and organic products, as well as home-made confectionery, mushrooms, chutneys, jams, breads and cheeses. It is a definite must on a Saturday morning for every lover of delicious food.

B PORTOBELLO ROAD MARKET

This is one of the most colourful and dynamic markets in London. It sells everything from books to second-hand fashion and cooking ingredients. It is especially known as a great place to browse for antiques and jewellery. The clothes stalls specialise in leather.

C CAMDEN MARKET

This is actually several different markets. The place is considered a huge tourist attraction, so it tends to be very crowded at weekends. The wide range of goods includes antiques, clothes, handicraft, accessories and furnishings – in fact it has all those things you realise you need when you see them even though you had no intention of buying them when you left home. There is a variety of world cuisine on offer in the many bars and eateries in and around the markets.

D GREENWICH MARKET

Greenwich is known for its fantastic market offering a variety of hand-crafted items, paintings and ornaments. On weekends, you can get a good deal on antique furniture, second-hand books and rare records. Then, like many other people – both locals and tourists – you can finish off your market tour with a stroll along the nearby river.

E LEADENHALL MARKET

Located in a beautiful Victorian glass-roof building that has already become a tourist attraction, the market offers a wide selection of reasonably priced luxury foods. It features the most exotic ingredients and fine wines that may be difficult to get elsewhere. It is especially good for rarer cheeses, seafood, and meats. You can relax and have a delicious lunch in one of the many nearby market bars.

Adapted from www.londonmarkets.co.uk

1.	It is located near a popular walking area.	
2.	You can taste food from many different countries.	
3.	On certain days you can pay less than usual.	
4.	It sells food which may not be easy to find in other places.	
5.	You can buy clothes that have already been worn.	
6.	It is a good place to buy healthy food.	
7.	It consists of more than one market.	
8.	It is good for buying clothes of one particular type.	

TASK (8 points)

Read information about UK music festivals. For each task (1–8) choose the corresponding variant (A–E). Write down the letter into the table. Each letter can be used more than once. For each correct answer you get 1 point.

UK music festivals

The United Kingdom has a long tradition of music festivals. There are a large number of them, covering a wide variety of music genres. Here is the Top Five.

A ▶ Glastonbury Festival

The Glastonbury Festival is the world’s largest green field open-air music and performing arts festival. Apart from contemporary music, the festival features such attractions as dance, comedy, theatre, circus, a kid’s area and poetry. It is also committed to the protection of the environment: it encourages water and energy saving and the use of fair-trade products. Glastonbury is a definite must for every festival-goer. So, come to the Vale of Avalon (they say this is where King Arthur was buried!) between 24th and 28th June.

B ▶ T in the Park

T in the Park is a three-day festival that has been held in Scotland since 2004. It takes place on the same weekend as the Oxegen festival in Ireland (between 10th and 12th July) and usually features a similar selection of artists. Located in a huge area of a disused airfield in Balado, T in the Park is one of the noisiest and craziest festivals in Great Britain. Altogether, there are seven music stages, as well as other attractions such as a large funfair, numerous shops and bars serving organic food and drink.

C ▶ Wireless Festival

Held over two days in London’s Hyde Park, the Wireless Festival is Britain’s top event for fans of dance, pop, and rock music. There are also countless entertainment activities, including food stalls, chill out areas, and video games areas. The festival takes place between 4th and 5th July in the very heart of London with easy access to a lot of tube lines and bus routes.

D ▶ Wakestock

The festival started in Abersoch, North Wales, in 2000 as a wakeboard contest (wakeboarding is a combination of water skiing and surfing) followed by a party in a car park for 800 people with live performances of rock bands and DJs. It still remains the largest wakeboard competition in Europe. You certainly couldn’t ask for a more scenic location: the main three sites are situated at the foot of the Snowdonia Mountains overlooking Cardigan Bay. Wakestock welcomes both wakeboard and music fans between 10th and 12th July.

E ▶ The Eden Sessions

The name of the festival comes from the name of its location – the Eden Project, the world’s largest glass-domed global garden, referred to as the Eighth Wonder of the World. The Eden Sessions offer a festival experience like no other. The spectacular surroundings attract world-class artists and the festival organisers use them to encourage audiences to think about what they can do to help our planet. The festival takes place in St Austell, Cornwall, on various dates in July and August.

Which festival...

1.	...is located in the center of a big city?	
2.	...started as an event during which music wasn’t most important?	
3.	...usually features the same kind of musicians as another music event?	
4.	...is set in a place associated with a well-known legend?	
5.	...makes people aware of environmental issues thanks to its location?	
6.	...is located in a place of great natural beauty?	
7.	...is located in a place where planes used to land and take off?	
8.	...has the widest offer of cultural attractions?	

TASK (8 points)

Read information about popular British comedy series. For each task (1–8) choose the corresponding variant (A–E). Write down the letter into the table. Each letter can be used more than once. For each correct answer you get 1 point.

Best British Sitcoms

In a 2004 BBC2 poll, the British public voted for their favourite British sitcom. Here is the final Top Five.

A	Only Fools And Horses
No.1	The show tells the story of the ups and downs of an ambitious market trader Derek “Del Boy” Trotter, his brother Rodney and their grandfather, later replaced by Uncle Albert. Del and Rodney are continually trying to get rich through doing all sorts of strange business but most of their attempts fail. Much of the show’s humour comes from Del’s lack of good manners and Rodney’s stupidity. And of course from Uncle Albert, whose war anecdotes have become part of the history of English TV comedy.
B	Blackadder
No.2	<i>Blackadder</i> is set in more than one historical era and follows the misfortunes of Edmund Blackadder (played by Rowan Atkinson), who in each series is a member of a British family present at many important events in British history (from the Middle Ages to World War I). Apart from Atkinson, the show also stars Hugh Laurie, who later became hugely popular worldwide thanks to his role of Doctor House.
C	The Vicar of Dibley
No.3	The show follows the adventures of Geraldine Grainger, a cheerful and practical vicar of a small country village called Dibley. The villagers are initially shocked to find out that their vicar is going to be a woman (the Church of England made a historic decision in 1992 and allowed women to become vicars). However, they soon come to like Geraldine, who helps to improve the village. The jokes in <i>The Vicar of Dibley</i> are softer and gentler than in other sitcoms.
D	Dad’s Army
No.4	Set during World War II, <i>Dad’s Army</i> focuses on the adventures of a group of British soldiers who are totally unprepared for a real war. There is Private Frazer, a Scotsman who is always complaining about everything; Lance Corporal Jones, who is far too old for the army; and Private Pike, a mummy’s boy who, in contrast, is not old enough to be a soldier. The show is famous for the brilliant acting and the memorable catch-phrases.
E	Fawlty Towers
No.5	The show presents the hilarious adventures of Basil, an exceptionally rude hotel owner, his domineering wife Sybil, Polly the waitress (who usually ends up running the hotel herself!) and the Spanish waiter Manuel (who is doing his best to master the English language). It achieved remarkable global success mainly thanks to the fantastic script-writing of John Cleese, an ex-member of the world-famous comedy series <i>Monty Python’s Flying Circus</i> and his then wife Connie Booth, as well as brilliant acting from the cast.

Which sitcom...

1.	...was written by a married couple?	
2.	...considerably differs from the other sitcoms in terms of humour?	
3.	...stars an actor who was already known worldwide from another television show?	
4.	...is set in several different periods?	
5.	...features a character who was not at first liked by others?	
6.	...stars an actor who had to wait some time for his global success?	
7.	...introduces famous sayings and is set during a war?	
8.	...presents the financial misfortunes of the characters?	

TASK (8 points)

Read job advertisements below. For each task (1–8) choose the corresponding variant (A–E). Write down the letter into the table. Each letter can be used more than once. For each correct answer you get 1 point.

A Administrative Assistant

As an Administrative Assistant with our non-profit charity, your role will involve: scheduling appointments, booking travel and accommodation; dealing with incoming and outgoing mail; meeting and greeting visitors; answering the phone. You must be: a good team player; have good time management; be a quick, accurate typist. You should also have experience in face-to-face customer service. We offer thirty days holiday, flexible working hours and a friendly working atmosphere.

C Primary Teacher

We are seeking a Primary Teacher to take two Year 1 classes and one Year 2 class in a privately run school in South London. Our school prides itself on our students' impressive results and a friendly working environment. We have a culturally diverse mix of students who are very eager to learn. The parents are very supportive. We strongly believe in the success of our staff.

B WEB DESIGNER

We are currently recruiting for the position of Web Designer to assist the Creative Director on various projects from the initial concept stage to interactive design, 3D animation and motion graphics. The ideal candidate will have at least three years' experience in 3D design, and a portfolio that demonstrates his/her animation and graphics skills (e.g. interactive games or other applications). We offer an extensive skills development programme including seminars and on-the-job training.

D CHEF

Exclusive, city centre hotel and restaurant seeks a Chef. The position offers a great amount of variety, from informal bistro dining, to official banquets, weddings and conference events. You will be taking control of a section of the kitchen and assisting the more senior chefs, as well as helping the development of the junior chefs. You must have a minimum of 1-2 years experience in a similar position.

E Finance Accountant

We are seeking a Finance Assistant to join a motivated and dynamic finance team of a big international company. The key responsibilities include: preparing budgets and financial reports; helping in the preparation of financial accounts and managing a small team of accounts assistants. This is an excellent opportunity, offering long-term employment and a great working environment in a central, easy to reach location.

1.	You will be helping to train other employees.	
2.	You will be working in a place which is proud of its achievements.	
3.	You will have many opportunities to develop your skills.	
4.	You must prove your skills by showing something specific that you have done.	
5.	You will be responsible for the work of a group of employees.	
6.	You will be working for an organisation whose aim is to help people, not make money.	
7.	You will not have to work the same hours every day.	
8.	You shouldn't have problems getting to work.	

TASK (6 points)

Read the text below. Match each task (1–6) with the corresponding letter (A–G) and title. Write down the letter next to the task. There is one extra letter (title). For each correct answer you get 1 point.

A.	THE RIGHT TO READ
B.	IT JUST DOESN'T WORK
C.	LET THE EXPERTS DECIDE
D.	MORE THINGS TO BAN
E.	NATURAL BUT NOT RIGHT
F.	REASONS TO BAN THEM
G.	WHO DECIDES?

Commentary Education

Banning books in schools

1.

Let me make it clear: I understand them. I know why they do it. They want to protect their children. It's human nature. However, let me make it equally clear: I think they're wrong to do it. I'm talking about parents in the US who push schools to ban books; books that they consider unsuitable for schoolchildren to read. They think it's wrong for teachers to set certain books as class texts. They believe these books do not belong in classrooms or school libraries.

2.

Last year there were almost five hundred attempts to ban books in US schools. Most cases concerned high school students aged from fourteen to eighteen. In the UK head teachers control which books are on the school curriculum and which are not. But in the US this control is often exercised by school boards, and parents can convince the boards to tell school principals, teachers and librarians to get rid of unsuitable books.

3.

The books the parents object to contain 'bad' language or references to vampires, violence, drugs, suicide, religion, racism or sex. They include respected works of literature like 'Catcher in the Rye' by JD Salinger or Harper Lee's 'To Kill A Mockingbird' as well as more recent popular 'teen' fiction such as Stephanie Meyer's 'Twilight' series.

4.

Other parents, of course, fight to preserve the freedom of their children to read those books in school. They agree that parents have the right and the responsibility to guide their children through the world of books as well as through the real world, but they don't agree that they have the right to control what other people's children can or can't read.

5.

So why do I think it's wrong for parents to ban books in school? Firstly, because they are not specialists; teachers are. If a teacher thinks a book has educational value, why should a parent's opinions stop a child from reading it? After all, Shakespeare's plays are full of swear words, violence and sex and nobody is suggesting we ban them.

6.

Secondly, children live in the real world. They hear 'bad' language every day in the playground; they see 'unsuitable' things on TV and the Internet. So why shouldn't they read 'dangerous' books in the safe, controlled environment of a school with the guidance of their teacher? Anyway, banning books is totally ineffective. Children, especially adolescents, love what is forbidden. If a book is banned, it just becomes more popular and more children will read it. The only people who win when parents try to ban books are the authors and publishers of those books who will sell more copies.

TASK (6 points)

Read the text below. Match each task (1–6) with the corresponding letter (A–G) and title. Write down the letter next to the task. There is one extra letter (title). For each correct answer you get 1 point.

A.	200 YEARS OF FAILURE
B.	UNUSUAL CUSTOMS
C.	BACK IN FASHION
D.	TWO REASONS FOR FAME
E.	ALWAYS THE BEST
F.	SUCCESSFUL AT FIRST
G.	TOP QUALITY EDUCATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

The University of St Andrews is Scotland's first university and the third oldest in the English-speaking world.

1.

St Andrews is a small town on the east coast of Scotland, which is famous worldwide as the home of golf. But the town is also known around the world for something other than sport. Its university: the oldest in Scotland and the third oldest in the English-speaking world after Oxford and Cambridge.

2.

It was founded in 1410 and received the approval of the Pope in 1413. By the time it was given royal authorisation in 1532 from King James V of Scotland (the father of Mary, Queen of Scots) the University had already grown considerably and it was to continue to do so during the rest of the 16th century. In fact, some university buildings that are still in use today date from that period.

3.

However, from the 17th century St Andrews began to decline. When writer Samuel Johnson visited the town in 1773, the university had only about one hundred students. During the 19th century, things did not get any better: in the 1870s, the student population was still below one hundred and fifty.

4.

This unsuccessful period can perhaps be explained by the fact that the university concentrated mainly on classical languages, theology and philosophy and in the 19th century those subjects were less fashionable than more practical subjects like maths, science, medicine and law. However, in 1897 the university founded University College in the nearby city of Dundee. This became a centre of medical, scientific and legal excellence and soon the university became popular again, especially amongst the upper classes.

5.

Today St. Andrews is a prestigious university with almost 9,000 students. It is known for its research excellence and academic results. It is usually considered to be one of the top ten universities in the UK and one of the top 100 in the world. In terms of entry requirements it is the eighth most demanding in the UK and there are generally ten applications for every undergraduate place available.

6.

The university has some strange traditions. Before becoming a student it is necessary to make a formal promise to behave well in Latin (the Sponsio Academica). During 'Raisin Weekend' every November first year students are entertained by older students: the women throw a tea party while the men organise a pub tour. This ends in a spectacular fight with shaving foam on Monday morning. But perhaps the wildest tradition of all is the May Dip: on May the first students stay up all night before running into the icy cold waters of the North Sea.

TASK (6 points)

Read the text below. Match each task (1–6) with the corresponding letter (A–G) and title. Write down the letter next to the task. There is one extra letter (title). For each correct answer you get 1 point.

A.	MORE THAN GESTURES
B.	EASY TO LEARN
C.	MORE THAN A VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF SPEECH
D.	NO LIMITS FOR CREATIVITY
E.	INTERNATIONAL DIFFERENCES
F.	ANOTHER BENEFIT
G.	SIMILAR PROCESSES

DISCOVER THE WORLD

SIGN LANGUAGES

We have all seen deaf people talking to each other using gestures. Very few of us, however, ever bother to find out how sign languages work. As a result, we often hold false views about them.

1.

One of many myths about sign languages is that they are the same in every country around the world. It is true that they share some common features, such as certain visual and spatial ways in which words are expressed, but they all have their own unique rules and vocabularies.

2.

Another commonly heard theory that is completely false is that sign languages cannot refer to abstractions. In fact, it is quite the opposite: not only can you tell jokes that have double meaning but you can also create sophisticated poetry. Sign languages have signs for all the abstract concepts found in spoken languages.

3.

Furthermore, sign languages are not just visual representations of the words of a spoken language. For example, deaf people do not draw a tree in the air with their hands when they want to say 'a tree', nor do they mime the act of sleeping when they talk about sleeping. There are a lot of gestures which are specific to sign languages only and cannot be easily interpreted.

4.

Besides, it's not only simple gestures with the hands that make up a sign language. Equally important are facial expressions, which are an integral part of communication and can change the meaning of your sign. For example, when a user of American Sign Language makes his or her facial expression intense when signing the word "quiet", he or she means "very quiet".

5.

Therefore, learning a sign language is not as easy as it may look. It is just like learning any other foreign language: it takes time and requires a lot of patience. The beginnings can be difficult because there are a lot of signs to learn and many of them are similar to each other. Also, like any other living languages, sign languages are developing all the time.

6.

Finally, it is not true that sign language is only for deaf people. Researchers have shown that teaching it to hearing children helps their language development. Even when they are still not able to produce vocal speech, babies can often communicate with their parents by using gestures! So it seems quite logical to teach them sign language.

READING ACTIVITIES - ANSWER KEY

HURLING (P. 2)

- 1 b
- 2 c
- 3 d
- 4 a
- 5 c
- 6 b

THE WORLD'S GREATEST POLYGLOT (P. 3)

- 1 b
- 2 d
- 3 a
- 4 c
- 5 c
- 6 d

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CHOCOLATE (P. 4)

- 1 d
- 2 a
- 3 d
- 4 a
- 5 b
- 6 c

HOUSES FOR RENT (P. 5)

- 1 c
- 2 e
- 3 b
- 4 d
- 5 a
- 6 e
- 7 a
- 8 c

LONDON MARKETS (P. 6)

- 1 d
- 2 c
- 3 d
- 4 e
- 5 b
- 6 a
- 7 c
- 8 b

UK MUSIC FESTIVALS (P. 7)

- 1 c
- 2 d
- 3 b
- 4 a
- 5 e
- 6 d
- 7 b
- 8 a

BEST BRITISH SITCOMS (P. 8)

- 1 e
- 2 c
- 3 e
- 4 b
- 5 c
- 6 b
- 7 d
- 8 a

JOB ADS (P. 9)

- 1 d
- 2 c
- 3 b
- 4 b
- 5 e
- 6 a
- 7 a
- 8 e

BANNING BOOKS IN SCHOOLS (P. 10)

- 1 e
- 2 g
- 3 f
- 4 a
- 5 c
- 6 b

THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS (P. 11)

- 1 d
- 2 f
- 3 a
- 4 c
- 5 g
- 6 b

SIGN LANGUAGES (P. 12)

- 1 e
- 2 d
- 3 c
- 4 a
- 5 g
- 6 f