

English 4B READING

3 READING

a Look at photos a–d and answer the questions.

- 1 What jobs are shown in the photos?
- 2 What kind of training might you need for this work?

b Read the texts. Were your ideas correct?

c Read the texts again. Who do you think would say this, someone at the Peking Opera School (P) or someone doing Swiss Guard training (S)?

- 1 The easiest class was learning how to act.
- 2 I feel part of an on-going history.
- 3 I had no problems being accepted as I'm very tall.
- 4 I often feel exhausted.
- 5 I can't remember the words of that song.
- 6 My parents didn't have to pay for my training – I did later on.
- 7 I get asked some very silly questions.
- 8 This sword is very uncomfortable to wear.

d Which of the two kinds of training seems harder to you? Which one would you choose to do? Why?

4 VOCABULARY Talking about difficulty

a All the adjectives in bold, except for one, describe something that is very difficult. Which adjective is not as strong as the others?

The training was **punishing**.

Discipline was very **strict**.

Teachers could be quite **tough**.

He described his time at school as '**arduous**'.

It's not likely to be quite as **gruelling** as Jackie Chan's training.

Those lucky enough to be selected go through **rigorous** training.

Sometimes they might need to use force to resolve a **tricky** situation.

TRAINING TO BE THE BEST

BECOMING JACKIE CHAN

How do you get to be the next Jackie Chan? Most people think you should find a martial arts master and learn all their secrets. Jackie Chan's training was in a Peking Opera School in Hong Kong. These schools used to train people for traditional Chinese theatre and apart from the acrobatics and martial arts, students also learnt speech, song and dance.

The training was **punishing**. Students would rise at 5 am and train for at least ten hours. Discipline was very **strict** and teachers could be quite **tough**.

Jackie Chan, who did his training in the 1960s, described his time at school as '**arduous**'. Students had to repeat exercises again and again until they got them right. At the same time, they would need to learn traditional character roles used in Chinese theatre.

Students were sent to Peking Opera Schools when they were children. They would stay at the school and were given food and accommodation as well as training. This meant that they built up a debt that they had to repay once they began performing in Chinese theatre. They were forced to sign a contract agreeing to this.

During the 1960s, interest in traditional Chinese theatre declined and the schools closed down. Today there are still academies in China that offer a mixture of the study of and training in Peking opera. However, it's not likely to be quite as **gruelling** as Jackie Chan's training.

THE VOICE IS A WEAPON

Imagine getting up each day and going to work back in the sixteenth century. That's probably what it feels like for guards around the Vatican City, the people who are dressed in the amazing uniforms from the Renaissance that you can see in the pictures.

These people are part of a 500-year-old tradition. All the guards are Swiss and they are there to protect the Vatican and the Pope. They're the oldest military unit that still exists today and is still active.

Getting into the Swiss Guards isn't easy. You need to be a Swiss male between the ages of 19 and 30 and you need to be at least 1.74 metres tall. You also have to have completed basic military training with the Swiss Army and have some kind of professional qualification like a degree or diploma.

Those selected go through **rigorous** training. They start by learning about the history of the Swiss Guards and how to recognise key people around the Vatican. At the same time, there is weapons training. Vatican Swiss Guards have to learn to handle old-fashioned weapons such as swords.

However, Swiss Guards also learn that the very first weapon they should use is their voice. Guards often have to deal with difficult tourists who want to explore parts of the Vatican not open to the public, so their training involves lessons in both Italian and English. Of course, sometimes they might need to use force to resolve a **tricky** situation, so they are trained in self-defence, a mixture of karate and judo developed specially for the Guards.

In this day and age, it's difficult to think of a job where you learn languages, martial arts and how to use a sword. It's no easy task, but in order to wear one of the most striking uniforms in the world, that's what the Swiss Guards have to do.



5 LISTENING

a  **2.10** Listen to Miranda, who trained at a drama school, and Fred, who trained at a football academy. Which sentence describes their experience best?

- 1 They both enjoyed the training, but felt they missed a part of growing up.
- 2 They weren't sure about the training, but they know they'll do well anyway.
- 3 They weren't sure about the selection process, but they feel they did well during the training.

b  **2.10** Listen again. Are the sentences true or false?

Miranda

- 1 During the audition process she had to perform scenes from plays twice.
- 2 She was confident she would get into drama school.
- 3 All her tutors were tough.
- 4 The school was flexible when she wasn't sure if she wanted to continue training.

Fred

- 5 His parents were unsure whether he should join the academy.
- 6 They knew they would have to sacrifice a lot of time to help Fred.
- 7 He was surprised to find that he enjoyed analysing football matches.
- 8 He felt disappointed for his friend, Jack.

c  Do you think the kind of sacrifice that Miranda and Fred made was worth it? Why / Why not?

