

PRACTICE SKIMMING AND SCANNING

The greatest of Victorian engineers

- 5
- A In the hundred years up to 1860, the work of a small group of construction engineers carried forward the enormous social and economic change that we associate with the Industrial Revolution in Britain. The most important of these engineers was Isambard Kingdom Brunel, whose work in shipping, bridge-building, and railway construction to name just three fields, both challenged and motivated his colleagues. He was the driving force behind a number of hugely ambitious projects, some of which resulted in works which are still in use today.
- 10
- B The son of an engineer, Brunel apprenticed with his father at an early age on the building of the Thames Tunnel. At the age of just twenty, he became engineer in charge of the project. This impressive plan to bore under the Thames twice suffered two major disasters when the river broke through into the tunnel. When the second breach occurred in 1827, Brunel was seriously injured during rescue operations and further work was halted.
- 15
- C While recovering from his injuries, Brunel entered a design competition for a new bridge over the Avon Gorge near Clifton. The original judge of the competition was Thomas Telford, a leading civil engineer of his day, who rejected all entries to the competition in favour of his own design. After considerable scandal, a second contest was held and Brunel's design was accepted. For reasons of funding, however, exacerbated by social unrest in Bristol, the project was abandoned in 1843 with only the towers completed. After Brunel's death, it was decided to begin work on it again, partly so that the bridge could form a fitting memorial to the great engineer. The entire structure was finally completed in 1864. Today, the well-known Clifton Suspension Bridge is a symbol of Bristol, just as the Opera House is of Sydney. Originally intended only for horse-drawn traffic, the bridge now bears
- 20
- 25
- over four million motor vehicles a year.

1. SKIMMING THE PASSAGE TO DECIDE WHETHER STATEMENTS 1-7 ARE TRUE/FALSE/NOTGIVEN

- 1 Brunel was less important than the other construction engineers in Britain during the Industrial Revolution.
- 2 Brunel was less involved in railway construction than other engineering fields.
- 3 Brunel worked only on shipping, bridge-building and railway construction.
- 4 Brunel's work was largely ignored by his colleagues.
- 5 All projects Brunel contributed to are still used today.
- 6 Brunel became an apprentice with his father at the same age as other engineers.
- 7 The Thames Tunnel Project was more difficult than any previous construction venture undertaken in Britain.

2. SCANNING TO FIND THE LOCATION OF THESE INFORMATION

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	Paragraph	Line
1. Thomas Telford		
2. Scandal about the result of the first competition		
3. Brunel's design for the bridge		
4. Funding problems		
5. The towers		
6. Work on the bridge		
7. The Clifton Suspension Bridge		

3. SENTENCE COMPLETION (MATCHING ENDINGS)

Look at these endings below, then try to add the question word to each ending.

EG: **A. were the only parts of the bridge completed during Brunel's lifetime**

→ *WHICH* were the only parts of the bridge completed during Brunel's lifetime?

B. was an important civil engineer

→ _____ was an important civil engineer?

C. meant the completion of the bridge was delayed.

→ _____ meant the completion of the bridge was delayed?

D. is a symbol of Bristol.

→ _____ is a symbol of Bristol?

E. was recommenced as a suitable memorial to Brunel.

→ _____ was recommenced as a suitable memorial to Brunel?

F. was chosen in the second competition

→ _____ was chosen in the second competition?

G. led to a second contest to design the bridge

→ _____ led to a second contest to design the bridge?

H. symbolizes Sydney

→ _____ symbolized Sydney?

NOW SKIM PARAGRAPH C TO COMPLETE EACH SENTENCE 1-7 WITH THE CORRECT ENDING A – H

- 1 Thomas Telford
- 2 Scandal about the result of the first competition
- 3 Brunel's design for the bridge
- 4 Funding problems
- 5 The towers
- 6 Work on the bridge
- 7 The Clifton Suspension Bridge

1 ____ . 2 ____ . 3 ____ . 4 ____ . 5 ____ . 6 ____ . 7 ____ .