

Reading

3 Read the text. Match questions 1-6 with paragraphs A-E that answer the questions. There is one extra question (put 'x' next to it).

Ballet Black

A

Ballet Black is a professional ballet dance company based in London. It was started by a young woman called Cassa Pancho in 2001 when she discovered that there were no professional black ballerinas in the UK. Pancho's father is from Trinidad, and Pancho was disappointed that there were no role models for young black or Asian dancers. Since then, she has dedicated her life to changing this. The company started off very small. Pancho had a job as a receptionist to earn money to buy shoes and train tickets for the dancers, and her grandmother gave her £2000 for their first show. When they first started, there were only eight dancers, four men and four women. Pancho was one of the dancers.

B

In the beginning, Ballet Black performed at a small theatre in London, but later they were asked to move to a big theatre in Covent Garden. They also started to get money from the government and charities, although everyone who worked for Ballet Black had another job as well as dancing. They were only dancing two or three days a week, as their shows didn't make much money at the box office.

C

When people go to the theatre to see ballet, they usually expect to see beautiful costumes, expensive scenery and even special effects, but Pancho is less interested in this. For her, the most important element of any performance is the dancing. She wants the audience to only focus on this, so works on creating shows that are both gripping and imaginative with complex characters. She asks her designers to make simple costumes. They use old material and clothes from second hand shops. Everything that you see on stage can usually fit into a suitcase.

D

Since the company started, many things have changed in the world of ballet. There are more and more black and Asian dancers in all dance companies, and you can now buy ballet shoes in brown as well as pink. Ballet Black is also special as they visit both big and small cities. This means that people who can't travel or who don't have a lot of money can also experience great quality dance performances. There are still things that Pancho would like to change, though. At the moment, they do not have live music at their shows. They use a recording instead. In the future she'd like to have her own musicians.

E

As well as Ballet Black, Pancho has started a dance school for three- to eighteen-year-olds. The classes are open to anyone, from any cultural background and they are very popular. She also runs workshops for people of any age. There are no limits, anyone can join and anyone can become a dancer. Pancho's biggest hope for the future is that one day, Ballet Black won't have to exist anymore. She hopes that there will be the same opportunities for dancers from any background. What's certain is that she is inspiring a new generation of dancers.

- 1 What can you see on stage? ____
- 2 How do the dancers earn money? ____
- 3 Who can see Ballet Black perform?
- 4 How does Pancho encourage more people to dance? ____
- 5 Why was Cassa Pancho disappointed with Ballet Black? ____
- 6 Why did Cassa Pancho start Ballet Black? ____