

**Reading comprehension EXAM****G.EXP B2 EoYA****PART 1**

Read the article and choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

1 What point does the writer make about bees in the first paragraph?

- A Everyone is frightened of them.
- B It's important to take care of them.
- C They're often misunderstood.
- D They're difficult to study.

2 Why does the writer say that explorers 'don't write reports or give presentations'?

- A to provide an amusing image for the reader
- B to make a joke about what bees are unable to do
- C to explain how people usually pass on information
- D to compare the bees' method of sharing information with what people do

3 According to the writer, why isn't it easy for people 'to put self-interest to one side'?

- A They are usually rather selfish.
- B They often have their own ambitions.
- C They are unable to consider the opinion of others.
- D They don't want to make decisions with other people.

4 What does 'this' refer to in the 5th paragraph, 3rd line?

- A The most popular restaurant.
- B The reason the restaurant is full.
- C The location of the restaurant.
- D The result of choosing a particular restaurant.

5 What does 'take a leaf out of their book' mean in the second to last line?

- A You should copy the way bees make decisions.
- B You should read about the way bees behave.
- C You should learn from the mistakes bees make.
- D You should avoid making the same choices bees do.

Reading G.EXP B2 TEST7

PART3

You are going to read an article about the famous novelist Charles Dickens. For questions 11–18, choose from the members A–D. The members may be chosen more than once.

Which member(s):

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1 says Dickens had sympathy for those less lucky than himself? | |
| 2 finds Dickens's books quite difficult to understand? | |
| 3 talks about how most people are made aware of Dickens's stories nowadays? | |
| 4 mentions work Dickens did when he wasn't writing? | |
| 5 describes one way Dickens made his readers want to keep reading? | |
| 6 states Dickens's books are less popular now than in the nineteenth century? | |
| 7 thinks modern society is unfair? | |
| 8 believes that hard work should be rewarded with success? | |

What do you know about Charles Dickens?

This week Book Club invites members to write about England's most famous novelist

A

In the course of thirty-four years Charles Dickens wrote fifteen long novels with strong storylines, complicated plots, unexpected twists and unforgettable characters with extraordinary names – Fagin, Oliver Twist, The Artful Dodger, Uriah Heep, Ebenezer Scrooge, Tiny Tim and Abel Magwitch. He also had a huge number of short stories and newspaper articles published. He used his sharp observation and dark humour to bring people's attention to the social problems of his time. It's really easy to learn something about the injustice and awful living conditions of Victorian England from books like *Oliver Twist*, *Hard Times*, *Bleak House*, *Nicholas Nickleby* and *David Copperfield*. Apart from writing fiction, Dickens contributed money to help poor children and tried hard to get laws changed on child employment. By the time he died in 1870, this hardworking, energetic and talented writer had achieved what he deserved. His childhood dreams of fame, success and climbing the social ladder had come true and he had become a literary celebrity in England and America.

B

Dickens didn't have an easy start in life. He was born in 1812, and was the second of eight children. His father had a habit of spending too much and they were always short of cash. The family moved house constantly with his parents struggling to pay the rent. Family life reached a crisis point in 1824, when Charles was twelve. His father had got into serious debt and his mother had sold everything the family owned, but still there wasn't enough to pay the money they owed and put food on the table. His father was sent to debtors' jail and young Charles was forced to leave school and get a factory job, working ten hours a day in his attempt to earn enough money to get his father out of prison. This experience left Dickens with a fear of poverty for the rest of his life. But Dickens's extremely difficult childhood had a positive side; it gave him great understanding of the lives of poor people and he was able to write about life at the bottom of society from his own personal experience.

C

Dickens was fantastically popular in his time. There was a brilliant way of getting his audience hooked: His novels were published just a chapter at a time in weekly or monthly publications, and each chapter ended with the hero in an extremely dangerous situation, or with a shocking discovery about a main character. Just as with soap operas today, it made people hungry for more. Anyone who couldn't read tried to get someone more educated to read the new chapter to them when it came out. Today the books are classics and still sell well but they aren't as widely read as in Dickens's day. For one thing, they're far from being quick to read. The old-fashioned language as well as the length of the novels requires a lot more concentration than today's popular novels.

D

There have been a huge number of adaptations of Charles Dickens's work for TV, stage and film – more than 200, in fact. It is through these adaptations more than through reading the original texts that many people get to know his work today. As a result, almost everyone is familiar with some of Dickens's stories and characters. One reason for their continuing and lasting popularity, whether as books or on screen, is that Dickens is not afraid to look critically at the dark side of Victorian society, revealing a tough, hard world. In fact, to describe disgusting housing or terrible working conditions, for instance, or cruel and strict people we use the word 'Dickensian', a term which comes from Charles Dickens's name. Sadly, many of Dickens's views of society are still relevant today. People still beg on city streets, society is still cruel to the poor and opportunities are not equal