

examWORKOUT

Eliminating wrong answers

1 Read the following extract and answer the multiple-choice question.

Cynthia strolled absent-mindedly from the hall into the living room. She wiped an invisible speck of dust from the windowsill. She rearranged the ornaments on the mantelpiece for the third time. She picked two hairs off the carpet. She noticed the plants needed watering and made a mental note to do it later. The sound of the phone ringing made her jump. Her first instinct was to rush out of the house, but she stopped herself and reached for the receiver.

When the phone rang, Cynthia was

A doing the cleaning.
B watering the plants.
C wandering around the house.
D preparing to rush out.

2 All the options in the multiple-choice question refer to something in the extract. Find a connection between each option and the text and explain in what ways the wrong answers differ from the text.

Someone's got to do it

Patio furniture, he thought as he pulled up under a streetlamp on the quiet suburban avenue. Mustn't forget to pick up the patio furniture on the way home. The forecast was good for the weekend, so the barbecue was definitely on, but they were desperately short of garden chairs. He switched off the ignition, opened the car door and smelt the delightful fragrance of the flowers bordering the lawn behind the thick privet hedge. It was quiet. The wealthy suburbs always were. He got out of the car and shut the door behind him. Above him he could hear the rush of wind through the trees and the joyful sound of birdsong. Life was good.

The evening sun shone brightly on the red tiles on the roof of the house: a Victorian mansion with a double garage at one side and a huge conservatory at the other. Good. No nosy neighbours. The house was as isolated as a lonely farmhouse or country cottage.

He strolled up the drive towards the front door, his shoes sinking into the thick gravel, and then he frowned. There was something else he had to remember, he was sure of it. But what was it? He bit his lip in frustration. He could hear himself saying, 'Don't worry, darling. I won't forget.' But he had; he had forgotten.

Glancing up, he saw someone moving in a window upstairs. Excellent, the householder was in. He hated it when he had to stand there pointlessly ringing the doorbell of an empty house. Early evening was definitely the best time to call: people were home from work but hadn't yet settled into the comfort of their armchairs and sofas and game shows and series. Automatically, he wiped his feet on the doormat. There was no bell, so he lifted the flap on the letter box and let it fall heavily three times. After a moment, he heard footsteps coming down the stairs and then a key turning in the lock. The door swung open and a middle-aged woman stood there in the hall, smiling at him.

He greeted the woman by name, opened his briefcase and pulled out an envelope. Before she could realise what was happening, he handed over the letter and then gave the short speech he'd delivered so many times before to his unsuspecting victims. The phrases came mechanically from his tight, thin lips: 'due to non-payment of the mortgage', 'the bank finds itself in the unhappy situation', 'forced to repossess the property', 'in a period of no more than one month'. The phrases seemed to physically hurt the woman. She flinched, her smile disappeared, she seemed to shrink and her eyes glistened. By the time he had finished and wished her a good evening, she was crying and her face was white with shock.

As he was walking back to the car, he remembered with a little smirk of relief what had been hiding in his memory: Suntan lotion. He had to buy some suntan lotion.



Read the text and choose the correct answers.

- 1 As he stops in front of the house, the main character**
 - A admires the patio furniture.
 - B allows his thoughts to wander.
 - C picks up some items.
 - D switches off the car radio.

- 2 The character is pleased with the house because**
 - A he is impressed by its wealth.
 - B he finds the style attractive.
 - C it is located in the countryside.
 - D it's not very close to other houses.

- 3 The character realises there's someone in the house after he**
 - A looks in through a window.
 - B rings the doorbell.
 - C hears the sound of a game show on TV.
 - D lifts the flap of the letter box.

- 4 The main character is**
 - A an estate agent.
 - B a person who delivers official documents.
 - C a door-to-door salesman.
 - D a postman.

- 5 At the end of the story, the main character**
 - A is moved by the woman's tears.
 - B is in a state of shock.
 - C returns to his earlier thoughts.
 - D feels relieved that the job has been done.