For questions **9–16**, read the text below and think of the word which best fits each gap. Use only one word in each gap. There is an example at the beginning (**0**).

Write your answers **IN CAPITAL LETTERS on the separate answer sheet.**

Example: 0 I N

Ice water diver

Rhian Waller is a marine biologist with a special interest (**0**) ..... deep-sea corals. She admits that, as (**9**) ....., little is known about these corals because they are very hard to reach, 1000 metres below the ocean's surface. However, (**10**) ..... is known is that they are being damaged by fishing nets, and research is needed to support conservation work.

(**11**) ..... recently, Rhian had only been able to study the corals through film sent from robotic submarines, but then some were discovered in Alaskan fjords that were shallow (**12**) ..... to dive in. This was a wonderful opportunity, but two problems faced Rhian initially: (**13**) ..... only was the water in the fjords scarcely above freezing, but she had never actually dived before.

She describes the experience as 'intense'. Within five minutes (**14**) ..... being in the water, her head and hands were completely numb, and she often had (**15**) ..... poor visibility she couldn't even see her own elbow. Despite the extreme conditions, however, Rhian's team were able to gather data on the corals of a kind that is (**16**) ..... but impossible in the deep ocean.

Essential tips

- Read the text quickly for general meaning.
- Remember that the gapped words will be structural items like articles, pronouns, prepositions and linkers. A few may form part of common expressions.
- Read the whole sentence to see whether the word you need is part of a longer or parallel structure like *either ... or* or *on the one hand ... on the other hand*.
- Remember that there could be more than one correct answer. But you should write one word only in the gap.

Question 9: From the whole text, we learn that our knowledge of deep-sea corals is still limited, but scientists are trying to find out more about them. Can you think of a two-word phrase *as ...*, which means 'so far' or 'up to this point in time'?

Question 11: Gaps at the beginning of sentences can often look difficult to fill. The best approach is to look carefully at the previous sentence or the whole sentence that follows the gap, or both. In this case, look carefully at what comes after it. The text tells us that previously Rhian could only study the corals using robotic submarines, but now she is able to dive in the Alaskan fjords. Which word can go with *recently* to give the idea of 'previously'?

Question 13: This is an example of a longer, parallel structure: *... only, ... but ...*

Question 16: Can you think of a common structural word to complete an expression that means 'almost impossible'?