Reading Part 1

Read the text and the statements. Some of these statements are true according to the text; some of them are false. Choose the correct answer True (T) or False (F) for each statement.

Mr Warren's secretary had warned me on the telephone about the automatic gates. 'Drive up to within two feet and they will open automatically. Sounds sinister, I know, but you can't be too careful these days'. I nosed up to the gates, which began to open – silent and, sure enough, sinister. I drove up to a gravel forecourt.

A heavily suntanned woman ran alongside my car as I was parking and said, 'Are you the photographer? You're fifty minutes late'. I said I wasn't and explained my business. 'My apologies,' she said. 'We're expecting a photographer and a reporter from one of the glossies. The reporter's turned up but where is the camera chap? Everything is running late because of him. I'll tell my husband you're here'.

Presently Mr Warren came crunching across the forecourt gravel, hand outstretched. 'Sorry about the mix-up,' he said. 'Pleased to meet you'. I asked him what interest the glossy magazine had in him. He was cheerily evasive, waving his arm and saying, 'Oh, you know, one has interests and concerns which other people may find... illuminating'.

Mr Warren's house was a Victorian mansion, laced with dark corridors. The vertical planes were crowded with paintings, which passed in a blur as I followed him, trying to keep up with his long strides down the long gloomy corridors.

At one point we scooted through a sort of half-room, where there was enough space for a table with chairs on either side and sitting in these chairs were two figures. They made me jump when I saw them; then I thought they might be dummies, but they were real enough. One was a woman, head down, who scribbled furiously in a notebook – the magazine reporter, presumably. The other was a man in a bow-tie who leaned back in his chair with his hands knitted behind his head. 'And you say that was in 1975?' said the woman as we passed. Warren failed to acknowledge these people in the slightest way, as if they were apparitions and only I had seen them.

1. The writer had prior notification of the entry system. ☐
2. Mr Warren met the writer inside the house. ☐
3. Mr Warren did not give a specific answer to the writer's question. ☐
4. The writer thought the house was beautiful. ☐
5. Mr Warren walked faster than the writer. ☐

Reading Part 2

Read the text. Use the sentences to complete the text. Choose the correct sentence for each gap. There are two extra sentences you will not need.

Proverbs and clichés

Proverbs and clichés are on the surface very similar. Both of them are fixed expressions which have become very commonly used and understood. **(1)**_______ A proverb is a familiar saying which conveys wisdom in a few words whereas a cliché is an expression so often over-used that it has lost any originality and deeper meaning. Classic clichés are 'he's not as young as he used to be' or those old football favourites 'it was a game of two halves' and 'you don't win matches without scoring goals'. We know what the speaker means. **(2)**_______

Proverbs aren't like that at all. They draw on folk wisdom, knowledge gained not from academic study but from experience. They usually have a very common, everyday theme like the weather or the home. Proverbs tell us what we already know but manage to make a familiar message memorable. **(3)**_______ 'Every cloud has a silver lining' is an excellent example of a proverb which does this. We have all looked up at a threatening sky but seen the sun behind the cloud and taken this as a sign that things will get better.

This is an example of what proverbs do. They use imagery to give us hope and reassurance. **(4)**_______ Others include advice, warning, encouragement and so on; in fact, there are probably few areas of day-to-day life which proverbs don't deal with. Proverbs not only guide us on how we should proceed but can also urge us to appreciate what we have. 'The grass is always greener' is a statement which is obviously not factually true, but which contains the message that wanting what others have is seldom a route to happiness.

One of the most remarkable things about proverbs is that they can have two different interpretations and still be regarded as wise. **(5)**_______ Many of us have been told that 'a watched pot never boils' and have probably nodded in agreement. But agreement with what? Is it criticism that if you are too impatient, things never seem to happen or sound advice that if you are vigilant, you can prevent unwanted consequences?

Perhaps that is the real difference between proverbs and clichés. **(6)**_______ The latter, no matter how popular, merely tells us what to think and how to think it.

A Let's look at one which falls into this category.

B Both proverbs and clichés can be said to fulfil this function.

C The expression itself, though, sounds ridiculous because what it says is so very obvious.

D The former allows us, even encourages us, to think for ourselves in this sort of way.

E There is, however, one very significant difference.

F However, these are not the only messages which proverbs communicate to us.

G Neither of these quite explains why certain set expressions have captured the popular imagination.

H One of the ways they do this is to paint a picture in words.

Reading Part 3

Read the four texts. Which text gives you the answer to each question? Choose the correct text (A-D) for each question.

A

Family tradition might dictate that their children will automatically go to private schools or they know that school fees are beyond them and that the state system is the only way they can go. But for parents who can consider both options, the decision can be far from simple. If you are thinking about 'going private', you will have to do some very detailed sums. Those with foresight can invest in a long-term school fee plan, maybe through a specialist company offering these but in practice more families tend to scrape by. An estimated 250,000 mothers are back in work to cover educational fees, while other families cut down on holidays and entertainment, and still others re-mortgage their houses or take out some other form of loan. Many schools now accept monthly payments and grandparents will often step up to the plate and help out.

B

I'd like to take this opportunity to remind you about the importance of your child attending school regularly. Students with regular attendance consistently do better at school. Being late for school also hurts a child's learning. A student who is ten minutes late every day will miss 30 hours of instruction in one year. And obviously being late prevents your child and others in the class from benefiting from an orderly and productive start to their day. We are a small, family-oriented school. We depend on the support of the parents and the community. I encourage you to be as involved with the school as you feel comfortable. The School Council meets monthly and is a wonderful group to join, if you want to support and shape the school environment. We encourage you to call the school if you have problems or questions.

C

Choosing the right school for your child is one of the most important decisions parents will ever make. You will want to feel your child is in a secure place and looks forward to coming to school every day. You will want high standards and an interesting curriculum. You will want your child to learn respect for both self and others, to become a good member of the community. Berrywell School's welcoming atmosphere provides a stimulating, happy and stable environment in which your child will find learning a pleasurable experience. Being an 'all-through' primary school avoids children having to change schools at seven. This also enables parents to build up long-term relationships with us. Throughout their primary schooling, the children are in the hands of one team of teachers, who ensure that new learning is built on what has been learnt before.

D

Appointed head of the School Inspection Service in 1994, Haroldson is particularly associated with support for 'traditional teaching' and for taking a scornful view of 'progressive educational theories' introduced into schools from the 1960s onwards. Supporters claimed that Haroldson was a radical reformer willing to tackle the failings of the education system and only encountering the defensiveness of the educational establishment. Critics argued that he was generating poor morale, rarely identified successes in schools, and that the 'progressive teaching' he attacked bore little resemblance to actual classroom practices. Haroldson most prominently identified weaknesses in schools with poor teaching and repeatedly asserted this view. He once claimed there were '15,000 incompetent teachers' and 'I am paid to challenge mediocrity, failure and complacency'. His blunt approach gained him many enemies, especially in the teaching profession.

In which text does the writer:

1. promote the benefits of a particular school? ☐
2. discuss attempts to improve education? ☐
3. give advice on how to fund a child's education? ☐

Which text is saying the following?

4. Providing continuity in education is beneficial. ☐
5. Some teaching methods have been criticised. ☐
6. Parents can influence school decision-making. ☐
7. Many parents face difficulties. ☐

Reading Part 4

Read the text and answer the questions. Use a maximum of five words for each question.

A mind for moving abroad

Across the globe, people dream of a better life abroad. A BBC poll in 2006 found that more than half of Britons have considered emigrating. But how many understand how a change in lifestyle can affect their health and their happiness? How you respond to difficult situations depends on your personality type. Some types are more suited to the pressures of expatriate life than others. Understanding yourself and your capacity for change is the key to protecting yourself against unhappy and unhealthy consequences.

Personality types can be used to judge how you will react in different circumstances. Those prone to stress will naturally find things more difficult and may suffer symptoms such as headaches, diarrhoea, insomnia and lack of concentration. In the long term, they might even develop diabetes or heart trouble.

Being able to call on friends and family is vital but, by definition, your life abroad will take you away from your usual social networks. It's important to make friends locally, both ex-pat and native, to unwind with them and share your problems. While ex-pat communities can stop you from integrating properly into the country in the long term, they can provide you with immediate support, as many of them will be as far from friends and family as you.

Some personality types are not only more likely to get stressed but are also less likely to rely on social networks to help them. These are 'distressed', or 'type D', personalities who regularly experience negative emotions and don't use the support available from people around them. This can be devastating to health, with some research showing that type D personalities have four times the risk of developing heart problems.

Planning can help overcome the potential stress of life in a foreign climate. If you're prone to stress, not knowing what to expect will cause you problems. Before you decide to move, make sure you know about the work culture, for instance. Find out as much as you can from other people who have already moved.

When I first began working in Brazil, I visited the local bank to sort out my finances. Unfortunately, I went on the day when everyone got paid, meaning that I had to queue for most of the afternoon to carry out a simple transaction. It's this frequent kind of experience that can contribute to a growing culture shock and slowly wear down your health. Sport, socialising or a creative hobby are all good outlets for emotional and physical tension.

One of the main personality traits described by psychologists is 'openness to experience'. Lucky possessors of this trait are more willing to enjoy new cultures and less likely to become rundown as a result. The Myers-Briggs personality test categorises people as either judging (decisive, organised, disliking surprises, enjoying routine) or perceiving (more flexible, relaxed, spontaneous and disorganised). Judging personalities find my Brazilian bank situation their idea of a nightmare. Perceiving personalities go with the flow and are less time-pressured, so they handle this type of situation better. If you are working in another culture, exploring these sides of your personality will help you understand cultural differences and keep you from feeling rundown.

So, if you're thinking about taking the leap abroad, there are a couple of things to remember about personality. Be open to new experiences and ready to try anything new. Don't take time too seriously – unlike many countries, western culture can be very time-pressured. Use the social networks around you to help cope with stress; don't keep all the pressure of your new life to yourself. Taking everything that comes as an experience to be enjoyed and remembered will ensure that living in a new culture is both enjoyable and healthy.

1. Which people are more likely to find moving to another country difficult?

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2. What can ex-pats give you?

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3. What are type D personalities reluctant to count on?

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4. What can help stressful people reduce their stress in a foreign country?

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5. Who can tell you things about the work culture of a country?

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6. Apart from socialising, what two things could help you release the tension?

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7. Which type of personality wouldn't mind the author's Brazilian bank situation?

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8. What can living abroad be if you follow the right steps?

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LIVEWORKSHEETS