Part 3

Questions 11–20

Look at the sentences below about the Iditarod Trail in Alaska.
Read the text on the opposite page to decide if each sentence is correct or incorrect.
If it is correct, mark **A** on your answer sheet.
If it is not correct, mark **B** on your answer sheet.

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11 The population of Alaska remained the same throughout the 1880s.

12 For a short time, more people lived in Iditarod than in any other city in Alaska.

13 After 1910, it became possible to deliver letters in winter as well as summer.

14 When travelling on the Iditarod Trail, drivers had to take food for the dogs with them.

15 In the 1920s, aeroplanes were used more often than boats and dogs.

16 Doctors in Nome had a good supply of medicine to cure diphtheria.

17 The pilot Carl Eielson refused to fly his plane because of the cold weather.

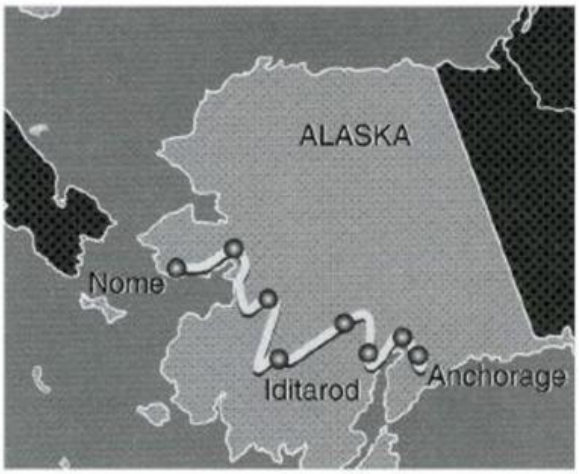
18 Leonhard Seppala's dog was able to lead him safely to his destination.

19 Balto fell into some icy water but managed to save himself.

20 The Iditarod race takes a different route every year.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

THE HISTORY OF THE IDITAROD – THE LAST GREAT RACE ON EARTH



In the 1880s, gold was discovered in what is now the most northern state of the USA, Alaska. Many people came to the area hoping to get rich. New towns were built and grew quickly. One such town was called Iditarod, which means 'far, distant place'. This town grew so quickly during 1909 that it briefly became the largest city in Alaska. In the summer months, essential supplies could be delivered to these towns by boat, but in the winter the rivers and the ocean froze and there was no way to get to them. So, in 1910, a winter track was built which would be used by teams of dogs pulling sleds. They would take mail, food and clothes to the gold miners.

The track became known as the Iditarod Trail. It took a team of dogs about three weeks to travel across Alaska. They stopped at 'roadhouses' where the drivers could get a warm bed for the night and something to eat for both themselves and their dogs. The trail was used every winter until the 1920s when aeroplanes replaced steam boats and dog teams as the main form of transport.

However, the dogs had one last taste of fame in 1925, when a disease called diphtheria hit the city of Nome. The disease could be cured, but, unfortunately, the closest medicine that could be found was in Anchorage, right on the other side of Alaska. Aeroplanes were still quite new, so no-one knew if they could fly in such cold weather. Also, Carl Eielson, the only pilot considered skilled enough to manage the flight, was away on a trip at the time. It was therefore agreed that the medicine would be transported using teams of dogs instead.

The trip covered over 1,000 kilometres, most of it along the Iditarod Trail. It took twenty teams just six days to complete the journey. Leonhard Seppala, a Norwegian who had come to Alaska looking for gold, travelled the first 400 of those kilometres. He had to trust his dog Togo's ability to find his way in the blinding snow and Togo turned out to be a reliable guide. The last part of the journey was done by Gunnar Kaasen who had driven dog teams in Alaska for 21 years. His lead dog was Balto. At one point Balto refused to go any further, and saved the team from falling into icy water. The diphtheria was stopped and Balto became a hero.

Nowadays a dog sled race is held every year from Anchorage to Nome, following the route of that famous journey in 1925. It is called the Iditarod and has become known as 'The Last Great Race on Earth'.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Part 4

Question 21–25

Read the text and questions below.
For each question, mark the correct letter **A**, **B**, **C** or **D** on your answer sheet.

Craigie Aitchison

The painter Craigie Aitchison was born in Scotland. He came to London intending to study law, but went to art school instead. There he found the traditional drawing classes difficult, but still kept on painting.

In his late twenties he was given money by the Italian government to study art, and became interested in early Italian artists, which shows in some of his work. He loved the greens and browns of the Italian fields and the clear light there, and wanted to put this light into his paintings.

This led him to paint colours thinly one on top of another from light to dark, but he insists he's never sure what the results will be. He says, 'It's a secret – because I don't know myself. I don't start by painting yellow, knowing I'm going to put anything on top.' Like most talented people, Aitchison makes it sound easy. 'Anyone can do the colours – you can buy them. I simply notice what you put the colours next to.'

Unlike some artists, he never does drawings before he starts a painting, as he feels that if he did, he might get bored and not do the painting afterwards. Instead, Aitchison changes his paintings many times before they are finished. This explains why his favourite models are people who don't ask to see their pictures while he's painting them. 'If I feel they're worried and want to look at the painting, I can't do it.'

Since moving to London years ago, he has not felt part of the Scottish painting scene. He says he is not interested in following any tradition, but just paints the way he can. However, his work still influences young British painters.

21 What is the writer trying to do in the text?

- **A** describe particular works by Craigie Aitchison
- **B** teach readers how to paint like Craigie Aitchison
- **C** introduce readers to the artist Craigie Aitchison
- **D** explain how Craigie Aitchison has made money from painting

22 What can the reader learn about Aitchison from the text?

- **A** He works in a different way from other artists.
- **B** He often gets bored with his paintings.
- **C** He improved his drawing by going to art school.
- **D** He did some paintings for the Italian government.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

23 What does Aitchison say about his use of colour?

A He likes starting with the darkest colours first.
B He knows the colours he's aiming for when he begins.
C He prefers to paint with yellows, greens, and browns.
D He understands how different colours work together.

24 Aitchison prefers models who don't

A keep talking to him while he's working.
B ask him about his strange method of working.
C worry about how long the work will take.
D feel anxious to see the work as it's developing.

25 What might a visitor at an exhibition say about Aitchison's work?

A

I love his recent paintings of Scotland, which are very similar to a number of other Scottish painters

B

You can still see the influence of his trip to Italy in some of these pictures.

C

You can tell he spent a lot of time drawing the picture before he started painting.

D

I wonder if his law training helps him at all, especially in selling his work.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Part 3

Write an answer to **one** of the questions (**7** or **8**) in this part.
Write your answer in about **100 words** on your answer sheet.
Mark the question number in the box at the top of your answer sheet.

Question 7

- This is part of a letter you receive from an English friend.

> My parents want me to go on holiday with them this summer but I'd prefer to go somewhere with my friends. I have to choose. What do you think I should do?

- Now write a letter, giving your friend some advice.
- Write your **letter** on your answer sheet.

Question 8

- Your English teacher has asked you to write a story for homework.
- Your story must begin with this sentence:

As soon as I saw the handwriting on the envelope I smiled.

- Write your **story** on your answer sheet.

LIVEWORKSHEETS