

Reading Comprehension

Practice Test, Part C

TEXT 3: World's Most Expensive Book Goes Up for Sale

Task: Fill 6 gaps (1–6) with phrases from options A–H. Two options are extra.

Check GRAMMAR (relative clause? noun phrase? infinitive?) AND MEANING (bird book or Shakespeare?).

Options:

- A "the most important book in all of English Literature"
- B which takes place on 7 December
- C billed as the world's most expensive book
- D the famous American naturalist and artist
- E which dates back to 1623
- F portrayed even the largest birds
- G to complete his study
- H people who've been here longer can't recall it

Read the full text:

A rare copy of John James Audubon's *Birds of America*, (1) _____, has been announced to go on sale at Sotheby's. Only 119 complete copies of the 19th-century book are known to exist, and 108 are owned by museums and libraries.

A separate edition of the wildlife book was sold for a record-breaking price of \$11.5 million a decade ago. The copy going under the hammer in December comes from the collection of Lord Hesketh. It contains 435 life-sized illustrations of almost 500 breeds. It took wildlife artist John James Audubon, (2) _____, 12 years (3) _____. He did so by travelling across America, shooting the birds. He would then hang them on bits of wire to paint them. The artist then went to Britain to print the volumes and targeted the rich to buy copies.

Lord Hesketh's collection also includes a rare copy of Shakespeare's First Folio, which Sotheby's said is (4) _____. Of the 750 that were probably printed, only 228 are known to exist today. The copy (5) _____ is offered for sale. It has a valuation of up to \$2.5 million and only has three pages missing.

Letters written from Elizabeth I relating to Mary Queen of Scots are also going under the hammer at the sale. (6) _____, David Goldthorpe, a senior specialist in Sotheby's books and manuscripts department in London, said: "To have all these items in one sale is remarkable; it's certainly never happened in my time — 20 years — and people who've been here longer can't recall it."

Gap-Fill Questions

Gap 1

"...*Birds of America*, (1) _____, has been announced to go on sale..."

Between two commas after a book title = extra info about the book. Look at the article title: "World's Most Expensive Book". This book is about BIRDS, not English Literature.

Gap 2

"It took wildlife artist John James Audubon, (2) _____, 12 years..."

After a name + comma = tells us WHO this person is. Which option describes a person? Audubon was American, a naturalist, and an artist.

Gap 3

"...12 years (3) _____."

"12 years ____" = 12 years TO DO WHAT? You need an infinitive of purpose (= "for the purpose of").

Gap 4

"...*Shakespeare's First Folio*, which Sotheby's said is (4) _____."

Now = SHAKESPEARE, not Audubon! How do they describe the Folio? Shakespeare = English Literature (not wildlife).

Gap 5

"The copy (5) _____ is offered for sale."

WHICH copy? You need a relative clause identifying it. Shakespeare's First Folio was printed in 1623. Two "which" options: 1623 (origin) vs 7 Dec (event). Which one identifies the copy?

Gap 6

"(6) _____, David Goldthorpe... said: '...people who've been here longer can't recall it.'"

Before a quote. Option H ("people who've been here longer...") is already INSIDE the quote! It can't fill the gap. Which remaining option tells WHEN the sale happens?

Vocabulary Practice

Complete the collocations using words from the text:

1. a record-_____ price (= beat all previous records)
2. go _____ the hammer (= be sold at auction)
3. life-_____ illustrations (= same size as real)
4. in private _____ (= owned by individuals)
5. go on _____ (= become available to buy)