Task 1. The world's quietest railway station

Some of the world's most heavily used railway stations are **(1)**..... in Japan. According to **(2)**....., 45 out of the 51 busiest in the world are in the country. Some 3.6 million passengers travel through the busiest railway station, Shinjuku Station in Tokyo, every **(3)**..... day.
But surprisingly, this small but **(4)**..... populated country also has some stations which are hardly used at all. Kyu-Shirataki Station, on the island of Hokkaido is in such a **(5)**..... place that it was only used by one person for a few years. High school student Kana Harada was a **(6)**..... passenger before it closed in 2016. The train stopped every morning to take high school student Kana Harada to school, and every afternoon to drop her back at Kyu-Shirataki.

But keeping the station open for just one passenger simply was not **(7)**..... . Therefore the operator of the line, Hokkaido Railway Company, planned to close the station **(8)**..... . But when they found out that this would leave Kana with no **(9)**....., they agreed to keep the line open until she graduated from school. Although trains still use the line, the station itself is now completely abandoned.

1	**A** established	**B** located	**C** placed	**D** positioned
2	**A** measurements	**B** numbers	**C** sizes	**D** statistics
3	**A** individual	**B** one	**C** particular	**D** single
4	**A** considerably	**B** densely	**C** largely	**D** mainly
5	**A** far	**B** homeless	**C** remote	**D** separated
6	**A** common	**B** regular	**C** usual	**D** typical
7	**A** commercial	**B** profitable	**C** successful	**D** valuable
8	**A** always	**B** constantly	**C** lastly	**D** permanently
9	**A** transport	**B** journey	**C** travel	**D** vehicle

Task 2. Whale-watching trip

by Jack Madison, 15

A while ago, my friend Olivia was telling me about a whale-watching trip she'd been on, in Canada. I wanted to tell her I was about to do the same thing, off the north coast of the UK, where my grandparents live. Whales had recently appeared there again, and my grandparents were convinced we'd see some – so I was sure my trip

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would be as good as Olivia's! But then I saw some review of the trip my dad had booked for us, when no-one had seen any whales at all. So, in the end, I decided not to tell Olivia anything about my trip, in case it wasn't successful!

Anyway, Dad and I set off on our trip – which was Dad's idea – and it was fantastic! Travelling out to sea on the tour boat with our guide, we soon reached the spot where whales often appeared. Then we waited – and nothing happened. I was sure this wouldn't last, though. People kept calling out they'd seen one, which was exciting – but then it turned out they were wrong. Then finally I saw something move under the water – a minke whale! So I felt like a hero for the rest of the trip!

The whale was a wonderful sight, with its huge back not far from the boat. Our guide said it was around five tonnes in weight and around 10 metres long. Yet, despite its size, it swam alongside us at speed, and with little effort. We waited to see if more appeared, and some time later, we saw three more some distance away, that kept diving under the water and coming up again. Then just after I'd filmed them, they disappeared.

Although the water's less deep around the coast, larger whale species appear in the area with minke whales, feeding on fish. But minkes are curious creatures, so they're more likely to approach tourist boats – which was why we were successful! Then later, up on the cliffs, we looked out to sea, searching for signs of whales. Sometimes seabirds diving into the water means whales are around, as they're stealing the whales' meal. We were unlucky, sadly – but we'll be back!

1 Jack wasn't keen to mention his whale-watching trip to Olivia because

A he thought her trip sounded a lot more exciting.

B he'd read some negative reports about where he was going.

C he wasn't sure if his dad had definitely arranged it.

D he didn't know whether she was very interested in whales.

2 On board the whale-watching boat, Jack

A was proud to be the first person to see a whale.
B began to worry that they might all be disappointed.
C tried not to get excited when anyone saw something.
D was glad he'd persuaded his dad to come with him.

3 When Jack saw the minke whale, he was

A surprised at how close it came to the boat.
B amazed that it was so much bigger than he'd imagined.
C impressed that it moved through the water so easily.
D delighted to see it had arrived with several others.

4 Jack suggests minke whales appeared in the same area as the boat because

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A they knew there were plenty of fish there.
B they were attracted by the arrival of the visitors.
C they didn't have to compete for food with seabirds.

D they preferred how deep the water was there.

5 What would Jack text to his grandparents about the whales?

A I'll send you my video of the group of whales – they only appeared briefly, so they weren't as interesting as the first one we saw.

B Dad said he'd really wanted to go to Canada to watch whales, like my friend Olivia – but now we're really happy we came here.

C I must take you up to the cliffs to look for whales – we've seen them every time we've been there, so far.

D You were so sure our whale-watching trip would be a success, while I still had doubts – but you were right.

Task 3. The giant piano

A young man in New Zealand recently became famous for making one of the largest pianos ever.

Adrian Mann, who now works as a professional piano builder, started building the piano when he was just 16 years old, and made many of the parts for it himself. The piano is 5.7 metres long and is very heavy. And the keyboard actually has keys that are a metre in length. **(1)**…… But despite this difference in size, the instrument can still be played perfectly, thanks to Adrian's hard work.

(2)…… In fact, the whole thing started when Adrian became interested in the materials used for the wires inside the piano. These create the notes when they're hit.

And he found that if the wires were really long, he could get an amazing sound. From there, he went on to build the whole piano.

he instrument was kept inside a church in his town for some time, before Adrian decided it was time to transfer the huge piano from the church to his workshop. **(3)**…… So in the end, the fire service had to come and help take the instrument to its new home.

Since the move, a lot of piano players have visited Adrian to try out the piano. But Adrian says that when they arrive, some people aren't very positive about the piano. **(4)**…… But actually, it always performs brilliantly. They soon discover that the piano can play a wide range of music, just like any normal piano.

There's been so much interest in Adrian's piano that he could probably start making and selling others just like it. **(5)**…… So, at the moment, he has no plans to make any more.

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A However, he put a lot of work into his original model.
B It's so big, you could imagine actually lying down inside it!
C So what gave Adrian the idea to create such a huge piano?

D They expect that the instrument won't sound very good.
E But things weren't always that simple.
F That's much larger than on a normal-sized piano.
G Most of them were surprised by the wonderful result.

H But he soon found he couldn't move it out on his own.

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