Our school newspaper

by Michael Williams

Some years ago, our head teacher, Mrs Waters, decided to start a school newspaper, and get as many students as possible to take on the job of producing it – and parents, too. She felt the newspaper would help them learn more about school life, through articles on things like sports achievements and arts projects, which not all students know about if they're not taking part. Students took the whole thing very seriously – and we now have a prize-winning newspaper!

Some of my friends joined the newspaper team immediately and enjoyed it. I'd always loved creative writing and drawing cartoons, which I thought would be perfect in the newspaper, so I signed up. My dad, who's a journalist, was pleased – he thought that even though I wasn't keen on a job like his, the newspaper would be a great opportunity for me. And he was right – I loved it! Dad often came along to give advice, which was popular with the students. It was difficult sometimes, if he was busy, but he learned a lot about the school that way.

My first job was writing a report about a sports event – a writing style I'd never attempted before. But Dad reminded me it was similar in some ways to writing a story – getting information in the right order. Once I'd understood that, there was no stopping me – and after my first efforts, I developed quite a professional style, which was brilliant. Sometimes the team couldn't use what I'd written, or my cartoons, for whatever reason, but I didn't mind. And sometimes it was hard to finish stuff on time, but I usually got there.

I'm now one of the editors – we decide what goes into the newspaper, so our names no longer appear in print. And it's stressful sometimes as we don't have much time, but we try to manage that properly. We also correct mistakes in people's articles, which we all had to get used to, but we were soon doing it without thinking – and in our own schoolwork, too. I still put off calling people outside school for comments on stuff, but I guess it's all good experience – at least, that's what Dad says!

1 Michael's head teacher wanted to start a student newspaper to

- **A** provide an activity for students not interested in sport or art.
- **B** make students feel more confident about taking part in something.
- **C** keep students better informed about what was happening at school.
- **D** give students the experience of being responsible for something.

2 Michael decided to join the newspaper because

- **A** he had ideas about some work he could do for it.
- **B** he was considering a career in journalism.
- **C** his friends had encouraged him to do so.
- **D** he liked the idea of being part of a team.

3 When Michael first started working on the newspaper, he was

- **A** disappointed when his stories sometimes weren't used.
- **B** delighted at the way his writing skills improved.
- **C** pleased to find he could make use of his art skills.
- **D** worried he'd be late completing some of his writing.

4 What does Michael say about his role on the newspaper now?

- **A** He feels uncomfortable about correcting other students' work.
- **B** He still needs to improve the way he manages his time.
- **C** He's happier to handle making telephone calls to others.
- **D** He's become better at making articles more accurate.

5 What would Michael's dad say about the newspaper?

A I was surprised at how keen Michael was to get involved – he's never shown that much interest in writing before.

B I occasionally had problems finding the time to help out at Michael's school, but the students really seemed to like my suggestions.

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C Michael would never admit it, but I know he's proud to see his name in the newspaper these days – and I am, too!

D It's been great to finally find out about life at the school through reading the newspaper. I didn't really know much about it before.

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