

FCE READING PART 1, 2 AND 3

You are going to read an extract from a novel. For questions 31-36, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

'Claire, it's Ruth.' Claire held back a sigh and walked into the kitchen to put the coffee machine on. A phone call from her sister was never over quickly. 'Ruth, darling. How are you?' As she waited for her sister to start describing in detail her latest disaster, Claire mulled over how much to reveal about her new business assignment. Her family would have to be told something, of course. Not that they ever came to visit, or called her home phone, or sent her letters. Still, it seemed only right to tell them it meant she was moving out for twelve months. Tuning back into the phone call, Claire realised she had missed some key information and tried to catch up with what her sister was talking about.

'So the doctor said it was probably lack of sleep. You know Sky is a bad sleeper and her nightmares have been worse since she started Year Two.' Claire worked out that someone was unwell, but was unsure whether it was her sister or her six-year-old niece. Claire thought about her own schooling. Her parents had paid for the best, obviously, although Claire often wondered whether that was to ensure their three children didn't affect their lifestyle, rather than to give their offspring a good start in life. The school had encouraged independence and character but had no time for tears and tantrums. Claire had learned quickly to work hard and stay out of trouble. More than could be said for Ruth. It had been a constant disappointment to her parents that, while their first and third children both achieved academic success, Ruth only acquired a reputation for bad behaviour.

Ruth's next sentence sharply interrupted Claire's thoughts.

'The tests are the week after next. That's why I'm calling. Is there any chance you could come and look after Sky? It's half-term and most of her friends are going skiing. Of course we can't afford that...' Claire inhaled deeply and forced herself not to rise to the bait. Ruth was always poor and begrudged Claire her success. Claire accepted that looking after a child on your own probably limited your career options, but look at the 'Harry Potter' author J. K. Rowling, it hadn't held her back. She was convinced Ruth could help herself if only she'd try harder. Claire was almost too irritated by the thinly-veiled criticism to react to the request, but not quite. 'Have Sky? How long for? When?' Claire could hear panic in her voice and forced herself to breathe in deeply. Once she was sure she was back in control of her emotions she said in a slow voice, 'I start a new work assignment on 1st March, and I'll... be on the road a lot. You know. Meeting clients.'

'Dining out on someone else's credit card.' Ruth's voice cut in.

'There's more to it than that.' Claire responded quickly. Then, before Ruth could start the age-old argument, Claire consciously lowered her voice.

'Tell me the day you need me to have Sky, I'll check my diary.'

'Well, it's two days, actually.' Ruth sounded embarrassed.

Thinking about minding a six-year-old for two days almost made Claire choke. She gulped down her coffee and wondered if she could use the new assignment as an excuse.

There was something in Ruth's voice, though, that made her pause.

'Can't Mum take care of her? I thought Mum and Dad were the perfect grandparents?' It seemed odd to Claire that two people who had no time for their own children could go mad over someone else's, even if they were their grandkids.

'Er, Mum's coming with me, to the hospital.'

Ruth's words finally got through to Claire. 'Just what tests are you having exactly?'

'Weren't you listening? You never listen to me.'

Claire almost smiled at the petulant tone in Ruth's voice. For a moment they were twelve and fourteen again.

31. When Claire realises who is phoning her, she

- A expects to hear some good news.
- B tries to hide her true feelings.
- C hopes it will be a long conversation.
- D knows exactly what she will say to Ruth.

32. Why doesn't Claire know who is ill?

- A Ruth didn't make it clear who she was talking about.
- B None of her other relatives had written to her about it.
- C She was away on business when the illness began.
- D She wasn't paying attention when Ruth was speaking.

33. How does Claire feel about her school?

- A She would have achieved more at a better school.
- B Her parents never appreciated how successful she was there.
- C Her sister was better suited to that school than she was.
- D She may have been sent there for the wrong reasons.

34. What is Claire's attitude to Ruth's financial problems?

- A She feels they are largely Ruth's own fault.
- B She wishes she could do more to help Ruth.
- C She thinks Ruth could get any well-paid job she wanted.
- D She feels guilty about having more money than Ruth.

35. What does 'it' refer to? (second half of the text, sentence underlined)

- A spending the firm's money
- B the task Claire has been given
- C looking after Ruth's daughter
- D the reason Claire sounds stressed

36. What do we learn about Claire and her family?

- A Her relationship with her sister has completely changed since their childhood.
- B She realises that her parents treated her very well when she was a child.
- C She doesn't understand why her parents are so close to their grandchildren.
- D She accepts that her mother is more interested in Ruth than in her.

You are going to read an article about the new headquarters of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). Six sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A-G** the one which fits each gap (37-42). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

The ultimate green home: the WWF's new headquarters

Sandwiched between an incredibly ugly shopping centre and a busy main road, the environmentalist Sir David Attenborough, no less, is planting a tree and declaring: 'Today is a historic day.' He really means it.

Maybe our children's future will be an overheated, desert-like world, but if it's not, it will probably look a lot like this. The new, highly environmentally-friendly home of the World Wide Fund for Nature, a hemispherical glass tube standing above a council car park, was officially opened today, watched by a small but enthusiastic crowd. **37** ____.

Known as the 'Living Planet Centre', it has jumping panda animations that greet visitors to its WWF Experience, where schoolchildren can interact with Ocean, River, Forest and Wildlife Zones. Since the mid-20th century, many of the ideas behind humanity's attempts to protect animals and the natural world have been started by the WWF. **38** ____.

The World Wide Fund for Nature is one of the great hopes for the world,' Sir David Attenborough said. 'This building enshrines that, and advertises it to the world.' The concrete is all recycled, as is the carpet and even most of the computer equipment, and there are many solar energy panels. **39** ____.

In addition, new habitats and plant species have been installed around the gardens, while indoors a home has been found for three tall trees. The sense of total calm inside, from the high curved ceilings to the plants and trees, is all the more remarkable for the building's urban location. It has been built between a canal and a small area of woods listed as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. **40** ____.

The contrast gives us an idea of what might just be possible in the future.

The WWF was set up in 1961. The organisation originally fought to protect individual species, such as the Arabian oryx, from extinction. Eventually, the focus moved from individual species to ecosystems: all the living things in one area and the way they affect each other. Sir David, who is an ambassador for the WWF, said: 'Now, it's not just individual ecosystems. Now the change is to a global approach. **41** ____.

That is because the planet is one vast ecosystem. The WWF has been the leader in changing everyone's attitudes towards nature.'

Sir David is clear about the task ahead, and more importantly, unlike many environmentalists, he believes it is not too late to make a difference. 'You can't turn the clock back, of course. **42** ____.

But we can slow down the rate at which the numbers are increasing, we can cut down the carbon we put in the atmosphere,' he said. 'It's never happened before that the whole world has come together and made a decision. To go as far as we have done to reduce carbon is an impressive achievement. But you cannot have unlimited growth in a limited situation. You can't expand infinitely in a finite planet.'

- A. Even so, it remains in an ugly corner of a fairly unattractive town centre.
- B. So even if you aren't particularly concerned about the environment, as energy costs rise you'll want to save money on fuel bills.
- C. Other such features include extensive glass to increase natural light, natural ventilation, rainwater in the toilets, and heat pumps that bring warm air up from 200 metres below.
- D. It is hoped their new home will be a living example of that.
- E. That means you can't put back forests that are gone, not for a century, and the population size is not going to shrink.
- F. If you want to do something, you have to persuade people of the world not to pollute.
- G. If humanity is to survive, they must have been thinking, it will do so living in buildings of this kind.

You are going to read an article from a travel magazine about beaches. For questions 43–52, choose from the authors (A–D). The authors may be chosen more than once.

Which section...

- 43. recommends paying the entrance fee? ____
- 44. states that the beach has featured in advertisements? ____
- 45. says visitors may be surprised by the water temperature? ____
- 46. points out that the water is quite shallow? ____
- 47. suggests visitors should take photos of the beach? ____
- 48. says visitors can walk on the beach in their bare feet? ____
- 49. mentions a pleasant smell from the trees? ____
- 50. advises visitors to get to the beach early in the day? ____
- 51. states that it is not always possible to visit the beach? ____
- 52. warns visitors to the beach to protect their skin? ____

Four of the world's best beaches

Which are the best beaches on Earth? Here are our top four.

A Rodas Beach, the Cies Islands, Spain

Some of Spain's most spectacular beaches lie in Galicia on the Atlantic coast, and perhaps the most stunning of these are on the Cies Islands. These unspoilt and uninhabited islands are a national park, with public access limited to the summer months, and contain the perfectly-shaped Rodas Beach with its pure white sand and clear blue sea. At first sight it almost seems tropical, until dipping your toe in the water encourages you to spend a lazy day on the beach rather than dive in for a swim. There you can enjoy the quiet, the warmth of the sun and the scent of pine from the nearby woods, and later on have an excellent meal in the reasonably-priced fish restaurant close to the beach.

B Whitehaven Beach, Whitsunday Islands, Australia

Australia is famous for wonderful beaches, and Whitehaven must surely be one of its very best. Set against a background of amazingly-green tropical forest, and with views across the clear blue ocean to distant small islands, the sandy white beach is like something from a picture postcard or a TV commercial. As you would expect in such a sunny climate, the water is pleasantly warm, ideal for swimming on or below the surface. The sand, in contrast, always remains cool as it is of a type that reflects the sunlight, so you won't need sandals. As the island has no permanent inhabitants, and most day trippers leave by boat quite early, in the late afternoon and evening you can have the place almost to yourself.

C Matira Beach, Bora Bora, Tahiti

Matira Beach on the Pacific island of Bora Bora has incredibly white sand, beautiful fish swimming in clear blue-green water, and stunning sunsets. The air temperature hardly varies around the year, and neither does that of the ocean – which is only waist-high even hundreds of metres from the shore. And unlike windier beaches nearby, Matira is quite well sheltered. There isn't, however, much shade, so it is advisable to use plenty of sun cream, and the sand can feel uncomfortably hot unless you wear beach shoes or something similar. There is no charge to visit the beach, yet it rarely becomes crowded at any time of day. Everyone should go there at least once in life, and when you do, make sure you have your photo taken as the sun goes down.

D Anse Source d'Argent Beach, Seychelles

This must be one of the most photographed beaches in the world, so don't forget to get some shots of your own, especially of the sea and the sand framed by the background of enormous pink rocks, with tall palm trees right behind them. It's easy to see why commercials have been made there. The patches of brilliantly white sand between those beautiful rocks make it the perfect place to spend a relaxing day, and it is well worth the small amount it costs for access. The best spots – those with both sunshine and shade – quickly get taken, so make sure you arrive well before the sun starts to beat down and the sand heats up.