Part 7

You are going to read magazine article about young people learning to play the cello. For questions **43–52**, choose from the people (**A–D**). The people may be chosen more than once.

Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

Which person

says that a key requirement for playing is difficult under certain conditions?	**43**	
admits the difficulties of playing can negatively affect how they feel about the cello?	**44**	
took considerable time to realise how they truly felt about the instrument?	**45**	
attempted to overcome what they felt was a lack of talent by trying hard?	**46**	
mentions their impatience to make progress?	**47**	
says a cello can reveal a great deal about the person playing it?	**48**	
took up the cello as the result of the limited options available?	**49**	
was disappointed by the inability of skilled cellists to explain their technique?	**50**	
mentions the gap between what players can do, and what they often aspire to?	**51**	
believes that too few people appreciate how good the cello can sound?	**52**	

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Learning to play the cello

A Sophie

I love playing the cello. It's such a large instrument, it forces you to embrace it as you play. And because it vibrates, it almost feels as if it's alive and breathing; to me, the sound is often close to that of someone singing. It really allows the player to express their personality, too. It's almost as though the listeners can hear the musician's soul. Having said all that, there are times when I find it an intensely annoying and frustrating instrument – when I haven't played for a while and I start practising again, and just can't get my fingers into exactly the right position, the resulting sounds can be really screechy and awful. But I love its diversity, and I wish it was more widely heard. Although it's sometimes used in TV ads, that's not enough for the general public to realise what wonderful music the cello can make.

B Josh

I could already play the guitar by the time I started the cello, and I chose it because I thought that restricting myself to string instruments would make things easy for me. In fact there were endless frustrations initially, as it seemed I'd become a lot worse as a musician. I knew what great music should sound like, and the noises I was producing weren't even close. As a result, I began practising obsessively in any moment I had. I loved the instrument, but I realised I wasn't a natural cellist. I was determined not to let that stand in my way, though. Another frustration was that if I asked any professional cellist exactly how they played, they were unable to describe what was physically needed to achieve the beautiful tone I was looking for. So for me, it seemed to be down to trial and error – and I was desperate to improve quickly!

C Liam

I love the cello, and after loads of lessons, I've come to terms with the fact that although it's dead easy for teachers who've been playing for years to draw the bow smoothly across the strings of the instrument and make a beautiful sound, they forget that for beginners to achieve that requires a level of control that's usually beyond them. Doing it wrong produces a scratchy note that'll make your audience screw up their faces in pain. Until you can do it properly, your playing will always sound poor, and you'll be light years from playing the sort of music that probably attracted you to the instrument in the first place. And teachers always stress how important it is to relax your arms and upper body – but how on earth can you, when you're approaching a piece of music you have zero chance of getting through without a mistake? But I'm hoping that'll come with increased competence!

D Karen

I wish I could say I'd wanted to play the cello ever since I heard it on TV or something. The truth is, I began for one reason only: the choice was between the violin and cello, as these were the only instruments we had at home, and my mother decided I looked ridiculous holding the violin – although how I could have looked less strange playing an instrument twice my size, I'll never know. It wasn't until after tons of lessons and countless nerve-racking concert appearances with my school orchestra that it struck me I'd actually fallen in love with the instrument; it had just taken me until then to see it. The cello can produce the richest and warmest tones in music. And for me, it's also one of the most versatile of the string instruments, able to produce notes that are unbelievably high, and yet just a moment later, sink down into the depths and cause the room to vibrate with its lowest notes. Fabulous!

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