A Saskia Werner

I was just 14 and my English teacher had asked me to write an essay about my home, so I decided to go down to the library to find out more about the big old house we were living in. I found several references to it, including a story in the press, a century ago, about a rich man who lived there but one day suddenly disappeared, never to be seen again. Excited by this discovery, I soon found myself fascinated by what was happening locally at that time. Following that I gradually became more interested in history generally, and I'm actually doing a degree in it now. That's something which might surprise the history teacher I had in third year, who gave me low marks for just about every piece of work I did.

B Chen Liang

I'd never really made much effort in biology, usually doing just enough to get over half marks in tests and exams, and I was happy enough with that. But that suddenly began to change in fifth year, when I started on a project that involved studying the wildlife of a local pond over a three-month period. I was amazed by the variety of plants and small creatures there, and I would spend hours just sitting watching the changes taking place as winter turned to spring. I hardly ever saw anyone else there, which was fine by me and in fact it was part of the appeal of the place. Sometimes I would suddenly realise it was getting late, that I'd been there for hours without noticing it. It was my own special place, and it was very important to me at that age.

C Malik Iqbal

I didn't like physics much at that age so I wasn't very interested when I heard we were going to study mechanical energy. But one day the teacher came into the classroom and said we would be studying motor vehicles. I suddenly started to pay attention, because there was an old motorbike on my uncle's farm and I knew he'd let me use it off the road if it could be repaired. Before then I wasn't completely sure how engines worked, but by the time the bell went I felt I had enough confidence to have a go at fixing it. In the end, with the constant help of a technical manual, I managed it, and I had great fun riding around the fields there. My new-found interest in a branch of physics meant that a few years later I had to think long and hard before choosing which science to do at university, though in the end I went for chemistry.

D Soledad Vega

We were on a field trip up in the mountains and I was getting pretty fed up with being wet and cold, so it was a relief when we entered a cave system which formed a natural shelter from the wind and rain outside. For homework, our teacher had told us to read up as much as we could about the formation and structure of these caves, but nothing could have prepared me for the amazing shapes and colours when we actually went underground, or the incredible scale of everything there. Going there made me think about things like the rain wearing down the rock and shaping the landscape over millions of years, and before long I was taking a real interest in geography, which until then I'd always assumed I was no good at.

www.rybkova.cz LIVEWORKSHEETS

You are going to read a magazine article in which four university students talk about becoming interested in particular subjects when they were at school.

For questions 1-10, choose from the students (A-D).

The students may be chosen more than once. When more than one answer is required, these may be given in any order.

Which student

1. had previously doubted their own ability in that subject? ☐
2. was surprised how quickly the time seemed to pass? ☐
3. became interested in a mysterious event? ☐
4. enjoyed being somewhere that few people visited? ☐
5. later went on to specialise in that subject? ☐
6. found a particular lesson at school very interesting? ☐
7. had difficulty making a decision? ☐
8. found one particular book useful? ☐
9. had to do some background research? ☐ ☐

LIVEWORKSHEETS