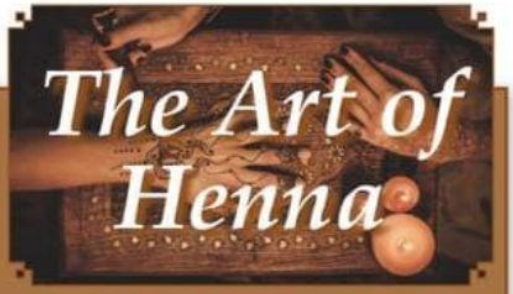
Reading

1 Skim the article.



A _____

The henna plant has been used to decorate the body for thousands of years. The earliest evidence of this comes from Egyptian mummies whose hair and nails were stained with henna. Henna was used widely, for example, in the Roman Empire, Ancient Egypt, other parts of North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, and Asia. It was a popular adornment for the rich and was also used by the poor to decorate their bodies because they could not afford jewellery.

B _____

Henna is part of the Arab world's culture and heritage. People in the desert have used henna for centuries. The henna leaves were collected, ground into a paste, then mixed with other ingredients, such as warm water, lemon juice, tea, sugar and essential oils. The dark paste can be used to decorate hands and feet, as well as to dye leather, silk, wool or hair. Henna paste was originally left on the palms and soles of the feet for its cooling effect, but as the paste comes away it leaves a stain on the skin – this probably sparked the idea of using henna for beautification.

Henna is used for special occasions such as weddings, engagements and Eid. The most popular of the traditions is the Henna Night where the bride, her family, relatives and friends get together to celebrate the wedding to come. The bride covers her hands and feet with designs ranging from simple shapes to intricate geometric patterns. The bridal patterns can take hours and are often done by multiple henna artists.

Tradition suggests that for as long as the henna stain appears on the bride, she doesn't have to do any housework! Also, the darker the stain, the better the marriage! So you can imagine why the bride would want the stain to come out dark and last as long as possible.

C _____

Henna is considered a herb with its oil, bark and seeds rich in healing qualities. It is used topically and usually not eaten. In ancient times, it was applied to the skin surface for such ailments as headaches, stomach pains, burns and open wounds. It can also be a sunblock and has been used on the noses of animals to prevent sunburn.

D _____

Today, henna's popularity is global, mainly because of emigration and social media. Modern henna artists keep the tradition alive by developing new techniques, methods and patterns. In the UAE, popular designs include intricate flowers, ribbons and net-like arrangements. There is also a growing trend to use gold temporary henna patterns but these are reserved for very special occasions.

2 Write the sub-headings in the correct place in the article on page 30.

1 Henna Today
2 Traditions
3 The Origins of Henna
4 Medicinal Properties

Reading strategy

Think about what the reading task is asking you to do and what strategy to use. Do you need to skim or scan?

3 Scan the text and answer the questions below.

1 Which of the following healing qualities does henna have?
   a It helps you to sleep.
   b It makes your skin soft.
   c It relieves pain.
   d It relaxes muscles.
2 Which of the words below is a synonym of the word *adornment*?
   a to decorate b dress c rich d design
3 List three ingredients that were added to henna:
   a _____
   b _____
   c _____
4 The word *topically* in paragraph C means …
   a interesting b eaten c on the skin's surface d ancient times

LIVEWORKSHEETS