

## A. Read the article. Choose the correct answer, a), b), c) or d).

### Dr. Maggie Aderin-Pocock, Space Scientist

Born to Nigerian parents in London, my journey to success as a space scientist has not been easy. When I was young, I was moved around a lot because of family problems and ended up going to a total of thirteen different schools. I was also discovered to be dyslexic\* and was often placed in remedial classes\*<sup>2</sup> as a result. Although I had dreams and ambitions for my future from an early age, when I told teachers that I wanted to become an astronaut and go to the moon, I was encouraged instead to go into nursing, a career they considered more suitable for me.

Fortunately, my family, especially my father, gave me a lot of real support and encouraged me to follow my dreams. Without this, I may never have succeeded in leaving school with high grades in math, physics, chemistry and biology. These results made it possible for me to then face the challenge of doing a physics degree at Imperial College London, which I completed in 1990. After which, I went on to gain a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering.

My career in space science has, over the years, given me opportunities to work on a wide range of exciting projects around the world, and I have now become one of the hosts of *The Sky at Night*, which is a TV program about astronomy<sup>\*3</sup>. Although I enjoy all the elements of my current work, I am now also eager to encourage more children, particularly girls, into science. It remains a very male-dominated profession even in this day and age. I strongly believe that science can have a huge impact on our lives and know from personal experience that, if you have a dream and work hard, you can succeed. I appreciate every day how lucky I am to love the work I do, and I still have a dream to fulfil in my future: to retire to Mars.

\*A learning difficulty that affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent reading and spelling.

\*<sup>2</sup>Low-level classes for students unable to keep up with the work in the ordinary classes.

\*<sup>3</sup>An area of science that studies space.

1 In this text, Maggie is describing

- a) the journey she took to get where she is today.
- b) the challenges of the profession she works in.
- c) the difficulties she faced at college.
- d) how hard it is for women to become scientists.

2 What does Maggie say about her school days?

- a) Her teachers didn't know she was dyslexic.
- b) She spent a lot of time in the lowest class.
- c) Her parents didn't care if she did badly.
- d) She was always put into the top class.

3 When talking about her family members, Maggie says that

- a) she couldn't have succeeded without them.
- b) they never encouraged her at school.
- c) her mom was her biggest supporter.
- d) her parents wanted her to go into nursing.

4 What does Maggie feel is important in our lives?

- a) Getting a job in science.
- b) Having the chance to go to college.
- c) Following our dreams.
- d) Having a passion for life.

5 Why does Maggie feel she is lucky?

- a) Because she has worked hard and succeeded.
- b) Because she has traveled widely with her job.
- c) Because she has become a TV celebrity.
- d) Because she has a passion for her work.

6 What might Maggie say about her future goal?

- a) "I'm happy I can retire somewhere different."
- b) "While it's not possible yet, I'll make it happen."
- c) "I'm not sure it'll be possible, but perhaps someone else will make it happen."
- d) "It's highly unlikely to ever become reality."