TEST 1, part 4 *You are going to read a newspaper article containing reviews of performances. For questions **20-34**, choose from the reviews **(A-D)**.*

In which review are the following stated?

Performers worked seasonally at one time..... 20__
The venue did not allow for a performance of a particular art form. ..... 21__
The performance reminded the writer of an unusual performance he had once enjoyed.... 22__
The performers were free to devise their own programme..... 23__
The performers had been recommended to the writer..... 24__
The behaviour of the performers was contrary to the writer's expectations. ..... 25__
The performance challenged the conventions of an art form. ..... 26__
Performances of this sort used to be very popular. ..... 27__
The performance prompted someone to reconsider a prejudice about an art form. ..... 28__
The performance had unexpectedly sophisticated requirements. ..... 29__
An element of the performance was distressingly realistic. ..... 30__
One of the artists performed despite a handicap. ..... 31__
The performance comprised a number of extracts from various works. ..... 32__
The performers derived pleasure from audience participation. ..... 33__
One participant revealed an unexpected talent..... 34__

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

Felix Masterson decided to engage artists to put on performances in his own home for his family's private enjoyment. Here is his report.

A Opera Recital

For the first of our 'home performances' we decided on opera, a form of art that especially moves me. The other art form that I adore - ballet - could hardly be performed in the confined space of a normal house, no matter how much ingenuity was employed! My wife and I were particularly looking forward to the performance by Footstool Opera, a touring company that specialises in mounting productions in confined spaces, often coming up with a programme to order as suits the occasion. When I was planning the event, I imagined the opera company would bring with them a high-quality Sound system of some sort to provide musical accompaniment, but the manager informed me that all they required was 'a piano in good working order'. I hastily arranged for our ancient upright to be tuned, and to my relief, pianist Antonia Holmes pronounced it entirely satisfactory when she tested the instrument before the performance. We had made it clear that no particular requirements would be imposed upon the performers, so they gave us a medley of familiar pieces from popular operas, and my daughter - who had previously been of the view that opera was unspeakably idiotic - was entranced. If I were to be brutally honest, I would have to say that the performers, apart from one tenor, were not in the top class. But I don't imagine many people would notice this, and it certainly didn't detract from our enjoyment of the evening.

B Puppet Show

Having grown up with that curiously British phenomenon of puppet theatre, the Punch and Judy show, I was determined to find one of the traditional practitioners of the art and secure his services. Alas, times have changed. There was once a time when no seaside resort in the country was complete without a Punch and Judy show on the pier, but today puppet theatre of this sort can hardly compete with video games at holiday resorts. Besides, who can afford to work only during the summer months? Consequently, there are, according to the theatrical agencies I contacted, none of the old-fashioned puppeteers left. However, I did manage to find a puppet theatre company called Little Man Theatre that included traditional Punch and Judy shows in its repertoire, so I went ahead and booked them. They arrived with a surprising number of boxes and cases. Naively, I had expected a miniature theatre to require a minimal amount of equipment. In this case, the size of the venue did indeed present a problem, though the nature of the difficulty was the reverse of what I had feared. We actually had some trouble making out the words of the crocodile character, largely - I suspect - because William Daniels, one of the two puppeteers, was suffering from a terrible cold, complete with high fever and a voice virtually reduced to a croak. Like a true pro, though, he struggled through the performance bravely. And once the first act was under way, I began to appreciate why so many props were needed. This wasn't Punch and Judy as I remembered it but a twenty-first century version of the story, requiring a staggering number of scene changes. A breathtaking performance, and though I felt sad at the demise of the old-time favourites, our children enjoyed it immensely.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

C Jazz Concert

I had initially set myself the task of finding performers of whom I knew absolutely nothing, simply by sitting down with the Yellow Pages, when a colleague of my wife's started raving about a particular jazz ensemble. It seemed churlish to do otherwise than engage them and The Hot Jazz Quintet turned out to be a group of highly professional musicians who appeared to make a point of being scrupulously polite and tidy. It was as though the stereotype image of the egocentric musician were being overturned in front of my very eyes: a surprising experience for anyone old enough to have seen The Who smash their instruments live onstage several decades ago.

Despite being in such close proximity to the musicians, it had not occurred to me that we would be required to adopt a more active role until the saxophone player handed my son a set of bongo drums and invited him to join in. As luck would have it, Mike is a percussionist with his school orchestra, and he was able to acquit himself creditably, to the delight of the professionals performing for us. Not being a connoisseur of this type of music myself, I had frankly not been prepared to enjoy this evening as much as the other members of my family. This perhaps makes it more of a tribute to the Quintet that I found myself getting quite carried away by the intricate rhythms and spectacular solos.

D Murder Mystery Theatre

We invited Murder Incorporated, a theatre company that specialises in murder mysteries, to perform *Death Calls* for us, and to those of you who have not been initiated in the workings of 'murder mystery theatre', a word of explanation is needed. This is no ordinary production. In fact, one could claim that it doesn't really come under the category of theatre at all, and it is not normally presented on a stage, either. The basic idea is that a murder is 'committed' just out of sight of the audience. After the 'body' is found, the task of the audience is to work out who the murderer is by following up on certain clues.

A few moments after the actors had arrived, when we were still under the impression that preparations were being made for the performance, a piercing scream caused us all to rush out into the hall. There we stumbled - literally - over a body oozing fake blood that was so convincing it almost caused my wife to faint. Yes, it had started. As we followed the actors around the house for scenes in various locations, we tried to work out who the murderer could be. It was a fascinating experience, and I have to report that my wife proved to be a brilliant sleuth, solving the mystery in record time. *Death Calls* was a masterpiece of condensed theatre that had me fondly recalling a production of *2001, A Space Odyssey* at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, which featured a cast of two, an audience of two and an old car as the venue. Highly recommended.

TEST 1, part 1 *(text 3)*

EXTRACT FROM A FILM REVIEW

The Sci-Fi Film Festival retrospective begins this week, and science buffs and UFO enthusiasts might do a lot worse than go and see Zemeckis's 1997 classic, *Contact,* starring Jodie Foster. Foster plays a research scientist called Ellie Arroway who intercepts a message from outer space. This message indicates the existence of intelligent life and it triggers a whole chain of extraordinary events.

The film is based on the novel by the celebrated astronomer Carl Sagan. Its strength lies in the fact that it manages to retain much of the power and compelling nature of the book, while at the same time maintaining a relatively high level of technical accuracy. This is largely thanks to Sagan's involvement in the making of the film. As many of you may know, Sagan died before the film was completed.

The main plot, concerning the discovery of the message, the struggle to interpret it, and the eventual contact between humans and aliens, is interwoven with the intrigues that arise from the ambitions of scientists, politicians and industrialists for fame and power.

As is usually the case with Zemeckis, special effects are used both creatively and effectively, serving to enhance the plot rather than swamp it, and there are fine performances, particularly by Ms Foster, Matthew McConaughey, James Woods and Tom Skerritt. While the method with which Arroway receives the alien communication is a far cry from the advanced technology actually in operation, the story is nevertheless convincing, and contributed to a renewed interest in UFOs and the search for extraterrestrial life.

5 The review suggests that one reason the film is so convincing is because

A Jodie Foster is a very fine actress.
B an astronomer was involved in its creation.
C it used accurate techniques.
D it was directed by Zemeckis.

6 In the reviewer's opinion, the special effects

A are the most important aspect of the film.
B effectively suffocate the plot.
C are used to the film's advantage.
D enhance the actors' performances.

LIVEWORKSHEETS