

READING TEST GRADE B2

Time : 30 minutes

Part 1

For questions 1–15, read the text below and decide which answer (A, B, C or D) best fits each space. There is an example at the beginning (0).

Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

Example:

0 A priceless B rewarding C precious D prized

0	A	B	C	D
	☐	☒	☐	☐

MOUNTAIN CLIMBING

One of the most difficult but (0) of pastimes is the sport of mountain climbing. Mountain climbing can be divided into two categories, rock climbing and ice climbing, and the modern climber must (1) many different skills.

Rock climbing (2) a combination of gymnastic ability, imagination and observation, but perhaps the most necessary skill is being able to (3) out how much weight a particular rock will (4) Mountaineers climb in groups of three or four, each climber at a distance of approximately six metres from the next. Usually one person climbs while the other climbers (5) hold of the rope. The most experienced climber goes first and (6) the other climbers which (7) to go. When the leader has reached a good position, he or she makes the rope secure so that it is (8) for the others to follow.

Since much mountain climbing (9) place in bad weather, snow skills (10) a very important part. Ice axes are used for (11) steps into the snow, and for testing the ground. Climbers always tie themselves (12) , so that, if the leader does fall, he or she can be held by the others and (13) back to safety. The number of dangers (14) by climbers is almost endless. Yet perhaps the most difficult part of the sport is the physical effort needed when the air has little oxygen. The (15) of oxygen can leave mountaineers continually out of breath.

1	A own	B hold	C control	D possess
2	A requires	B insists	C calls	D orders
3	A work	B try	C stand	D set
4	A supply	B provide	C support	D offer
5	A keep	B stay	C continue	D maintain
6	A indicates	B signals	C points	D shows
7	A passage	B way	C walk	D course
8	A safe	B sure	C dependable	D reliable
9	A gets	B takes	C occupies	D fills
10	A act	B do	C play	D make
11	A cutting	B tearing	C breaking	D splitting
12	A collectively	B jointly	C together	D co-operatively
13	A given	B pulled	C put	D sent
14	A marked	B touched	C felt	D faced
15	A need	B gap	C lack	D demand

You are going to read an article about THE ACTRESS Harriet Walter. For questions 16-23, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text. Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

Acting minus the drama

Harriet Walter has written a fascinating book about her profession.

Benedicte Page reports.

It is not often that an experienced actor with a high public profile will sit down to answer in depth the ordinary theatregoer's questions: how do you put together a character which isn't your own?; what is it like to perform the same play night after night?; or simply, why do you do it? Harriet Walter was prompted to write *Other People's Shoes: Thoughts on Acting* by a sense that many people's interest in theatre extended beyond the scope of entertainment chit-chat. 'I was asked very intelligent, probing questions by people who weren't in the profession, from taxi drivers to dinner-party hosts to people in shopping queues. It made me realise that people have an interest in what we do which goes beyond show-business gossip,' she says.

Other People's Shoes avoids insider gossip and, mostly, autobiography: 'If events in my life had had a huge direct influence, I would have put them in, but they didn't,' Harriet says, though she does explain how her parents' divorce was a factor in her career. But the focus of the book is to share – remarkably openly – the inside experience of the stage and the rehearsal room, aiming to replace the false sense of mystery with a more realistic understanding and respect for the profession.

'There's a certain double edge to the publicity an actor can get in the newspapers: it gives you attention but, by giving it to you, simultaneously criticises you,' Harriet says. 'People ask you to talk about yourself and then say, "Oh, actors are so self-centred." And the "sound-bite" variety of journalism, which touches on many things but never allows you to go into them in depth, leaves you with a sort of shorthand which reinforces prejudices and myths.'

Harriet's career began in the 1970s and has included theatre performances with the

Royal Shakespeare Company and television and film roles. She writes wittily about the embarrassments of the rehearsal room, as actors try out their half-formed ideas. And she is at pains to demystify the theatre: the question 'How do you do the same play every night?' is answered by a simple comparison with the familiar car journey you take every day, which presents a slightly different challenge each time. 'I was trying to get everyone to understand it isn't this extraordinary mystery and you're not visited by some spiritual inspiration every night.'

Harriet's own acting style is to build up a character piece by piece. She says that this process is not widely understood: 'There's no intelligent vocabulary out there for discussing the craft of building characters. Reviews of an actor's performance which appear in the newspapers are generally based on whether the reviewer likes the actors or not. It's not about whether they are being skilful or not, or how intelligent their choices are.'

There remains something mysterious about slipping into 'other people's shoes': 'It's something like falling in love,' Harriet says. 'When you're in love with someone, you go in and out of separateness and togetherness. It's similar with acting and you can slip in and out of a character. Once a character has been built, it remains with you, at the end of a phone line, as it were, waiting for your call.'

Harriet includes her early work in *Other People's Shoes* – 'I wanted to separate myself from those who say, "What an idiot I was, what a load of nonsense we all talked in those days!"; it wasn't all rubbish, and it has affected how I approach my work and my audiences.' And she retains from those days her belief in the vital role of the theatre.

line 54

16. Harriet Walter decided to write her book because she

- A. was tired of answering people's questions about acting.
- B. knew people liked to read about showbusiness gossip.
- C. wanted to entertain people through her writing.
- D. wanted to satisfy people's curiosity about acting in the theatre.

17. In paragraph two, we learn that Harriet's book aims to

- A. correct some of the impressions people have of the theatre.
- B. relate important details about her own life story.
- C. analyse the difficulties of a career in the theatre.
- D. tell the truth about some of the actors she has worked with.

18. What problem do actors have with newspaper publicity?

- A. It never focuses on the actors who deserve it.
- B. It often does more harm than good.
- C. It never reports what actors have actually said.
- D. It often makes mistakes when reporting facts.

19. Harriet uses the example of the car journey to show that

- A. acting can be boring as well as rewarding.
- B. actors do not find it easy to try new ideas.
- C. actors do not deserve the praise they receive.
- D. acting shares characteristics with other repetitive activities.

20. What does 'it' refer to in line 54?

- A. facing a different challenge
- B. taking a familiar car journey
- C. acting in the same play every night
- D. working with fellow actors

21. Harriet criticises theatre reviewers because they

- A. do not give enough recognition to the art of character acting.
- B. do not realise that some parts are more difficult to act than others.
- C. choose the wrong kinds of plays to review,
- D. suggest that certain actors have an easy job.

22. Harriet says that after actors have played a particular character, they

- A. may be asked to play other similar characters.
- B. may become a bit like the character.
- C. will never want to play the part again.
- D. will never forget how to play the part.

23. What does Harriet say about her early work?

- A. It has been a valuable influence on the work she has done since.
- B. It was completely different from the kind of work she does now.
- C. She finds it embarrassing to recall that period of her life.
- D. She is annoyed when people criticise the work she did then.

The end.