



Extra Training

Reading Task 8727

Read the text and mark the statements

True (1),

False (2),

Not Stated (3).

It was the night before Halloween, 1938, and some families around the USA changed stations on their radios to find themselves listening to a radio programme featuring Ramon Raquello and his Orchestra.

Suddenly, a voice interrupted it with some breaking news. "A huge flaming object" had fallen out of the sky in Grover's Mill, New Jersey. The programme returned to the music, but then broke off almost immediately for another bulletin. Something was climbing out of the smoke-filled crater, something from another planet. Reporters presented eye-witness accounts, the authorities advised citizens and scientists gave informed opinions.

Listeners panicked. Some ran onto the streets using wet towels as gas masks and some raced to be with their families in their last moments. Others loaded guns and hid in cellars, preparing to defend themselves against whatever had landed! Also, phonelines were jammed as desperate citizens tried to find out exactly what was happening.

What these people didn't realise was that they were listening to Orson Welles' radio play of the science-fiction classic, *The War of the Worlds*. Welles' impressive production staged « the events of the invasion as if they were really happening. It was an alien invasion! It was so realistic that thousands of listeners were convinced that a real alien invasion was taking place. How were people fooled so easily? Seventy years ago, very few households had a television so people got their news from newspapers or the radio. They believed what they read or heard.

So, when people found out that the invasion was just a radio play, they were furious. The following day Welles' name was all over the newspapers and there were calls for the government to pass laws to stop similar things ever happening again. Orson Welles went on to have a glorious film career, but he will never be forgotten as the man who convinced America that the Martians had landed!



1. The strange events take place on Halloween night, 1938.
2. Many families were listening to a play on the radio.
3. Many people believed that aliens were invading.
4. The people could be easily deceived by the radio at that time.
5. Orson Welles was upset that people had been tricked.
6. Afterwards, people were quite angry about what happened.