

TEST 4 PAPER 1: READING Part 1 (questions 1-8)

Part 1

You are going to read an extract from a novel. For questions 1-8 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.

Miss Johnson sat in the dining room having tea and looked out at all the people on the beach. Maybe she should go for a walk before dinner. She was just deciding in which direction she should walk when Mr Rodgers came into the room and walked straight towards her. There was no way she could avoid him; he had clearly seen her and she still had a cup of tea in front of her ready to drink. 'Do you mind if I sit down?' he asked politely. Of course she couldn't refuse; it wasn't in her nature to be rude. 'Yes, please do,' she said and offered him some tea. He accepted but then didn't seem to be paying attention when she asked him if he'd like milk and sugar. In fact he seemed very distracted. Suddenly he got up and started pacing up and down in front of the table. This was really quite annoying as he was walking right in front of the window and getting in the way of the nice view. 'I've got a problem,' he said, 'and I was hoping you might be able to help me with it.' 'Oh!' she replied. She hadn't expected him to be so familiar; they had only known each other a few weeks and they were not really friends. 'Well, I'll try,' she said. 'I'd be happy to help in any way I can.' 'It all started last week,' he began. 'I was on my way to the shops when I bumped into Veronica Gray. We stopped and had a chat for a couple of minutes. You know about the weather, and then just as I was making my excuses and saying goodbye her husband came round the corner. He looked very serious and not at all happy to find us chatting together. Veronica suddenly went very quiet and almost ran away in the opposite direction. Her husband walked past me, barely said hello, and followed his wife round the corner. I was very confused by the whole thing. One minute she'd been happily gossiping and then as soon as Gregory appeared she became a different person. And he, well, for a second I thought he might hit me.' I didn't see either of them again until last night, here in the hotel. I was coming down to dinner when I heard voices on the stairs below me. I didn't recognise who it was but as I walked round the corner I saw it was Veronica and Gregory and they were clearly arguing. It was too late for me to turn back, they had already seen me, so I said good evening and carried on downstairs as quickly as I could. But Gregory called me back. He was quite angry and started shouting at me; he said I should mind my own business and leave his wife alone. Veronica was crying and tried to tell her husband to leave me alone, that it wasn't my fault and so on. It was very unpleasant and I really had no idea what was going on. I said I had no idea what he was talking about and to be honest I might have just put it down to him being a bit jealous and left it at that except that at that moment Annabel came down the stairs and saw us. I don't know if you know but she and I are engaged.' 'Yes, I did know; congratulations.' 'And of course it didn't look good, having Gregory more or less accuse me of having some sort of affair with his wife. Annabel just looked at me and walked off. Now she won't speak to me. What do you think I should do? Should I confront Gregory and make him see sense? Or should I try and find out from Veronica what is going on? There's obviously something not right between them; I just don't understand how I got involved. I'd really appreciate any help you can give me.' 'Well, I think the first thing you need to do is speak to Annabel and make sure she sees that this is just a misunderstanding.' 'I've tried that,' he explained, 'but she won't speak to me; she doesn't answer the phone when I call her.' He looked desperate. 'OK,' she said gently, 'why don't I go and speak to Annabel, and tell her about this conversation we've just had?' 'Would you? Oh, thank you, I'd be so grateful.' She left him sitting at the table looking much happier already. And she knew just where to find Annabel. At this time of day she was always in the garden reading.

TEST 5 PAPER 1: READING Part 1 (questions 1-8)

- 1 Why was the interviewer not surprised that Darren had been writing since a young age?
 - A Because he writes like a trained professional.
 - B Because he has a very relaxed way of writing.
 - C Because he is well-known for the stories he wrote as a child.
 - D Because his stories are very creative.

- 2 How did he feel when he won his first writing competition?
 - A embarrassed
 - B different from his friends
 - C excited
 - D he was too young to feel anything

- 3 When he says 'my friends were used to that' in line 13, what does 'that' refer to?
 - A watching football and going for bike rides together
 - B Darren winning competitions
 - C carrying notebooks in their bags
 - D Darren writing things down in his notebook

- 4 Why does he say he prefers writing creative fiction to writing about real news events?
 - A He has never written about real life events.
 - B He finds real life events boring.
 - C He likes to make things up.
 - D Writing fiction means he doesn't have to do research.

- 5 Why does he think it is important that the people and events in his books are believable?
 - A Because if they are not readers will not understand the story.
 - B Because if they are not readers will not get involved in the story.
 - C Because people want to read about everyday people and events.
 - D Because people prefer to read about things they know something about.

- 6 What does he always make sure his stories have?
 - A a definite finish
 - B a good beginning
 - C real life characters
 - D interesting events

- 7 Why does he say he includes unhappy events in his stories?
 - A Because he likes to make people feel depressed.
 - B Because writing only about happy things can be frustrating.
 - C Because he knows more about sad events.
 - D Because he wants his stories to be like real life.

- 8 How does he say his friends have helped him?
 - A by telling him what they really think of his work
 - B by always telling him how good his books are
 - C by buying all his books
 - D by understanding he has a lot of work

TEST 5 PAPER 1: READING Part 1 (questions 1-8)

Part 1

You are going to read an interview with a successful novelist. For questions 1-8 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.

Darren Bell is a well-known household name and has had three best-sellers. I met him to find out what his secret was. He writes in such a natural, easy-going style I wasn't surprised when he told me he had been writing stories from a very young age. 'I've always enjoyed writing: I used to write short stories when I was at school and really enjoyed the opportunity to be creative and let my imagination run wild.' When I asked how his family and friends reacted to his creative writing he explained that it was largely thanks to their positive feedback that he had pursued a career as a writer. He said his teachers and parents always encouraged him to write and to enter competitions; he won his first writing competition at school when he was just 7 years old. 'My story was printed in the local newspaper, it was really exciting and my Mum still has a copy of the paper somewhere.' 'Did you ever feel very different from your school friends?' I asked him. 'Not at all,' he said. 'We did all the normal things like watch football together, go out on our bikes and so on. The only difference was that I would be more likely to have a notebook in my bag and might sometimes write ideas down, but my friends were used to that, it didn't feel strange and no-one ever said anything about it.'

line 13 I asked how his passion for writing developed as he got older and how he found his particular fictional style. He explained that when he went to university he got involved in writing for the university newspaper. He told me he wrote all sorts of different articles but at the end of the day after trying all sorts of different writing types he decided he preferred writing fiction rather than serious articles about news events. 'As it is now, it was always the sense of getting completely lost in my own world that attracted me. I like being creative and I feel more comfortable expressing my own ideas and images rather than writing about things that are real.' He explained this further by saying that when you write about true facts you have to justify everything and get things right but when he was writing his own stories he felt like he could write about anything he liked. 'That's not to say you don't have to do a lot of research,' he pointed out. He told me he had spent hours in libraries and museums looking up all sorts of things from chemical equations to dinosaurs and that the best source of information was talking to experts and people who had really experienced the sorts of things he wanted the characters in his books to experience. He says it's important to make the events and characters seem believable otherwise people won't connect with the story. 'I always make an effort to research my subject matter properly as there will always be someone out there who really does know about whatever I'm talking about and I don't want anybody to read my books and think I'm talking nonsense.'

I asked him where he got his inspiration from for his unusual storylines and he openly admitted that it was very boring everyday events. 'When I write I start by thinking of a real situation and real people and then imagine what they might do if something unexpected or unusual happened. I like to write about how different people react and how this affects their relationships with one another.' He added that one thing that he always tried to ensure was that his stories had a clear and satisfying ending. 'I don't like to leave any loose ends,' he said. 'I myself find it frustrating if at the end of a book something is not explained, so I try and avoid this frustration for my readers.' He also says he tries to give his novels happy endings. 'That's not to say sad things don't happen in my novels because they do and any story where everyone is happy and only good things happen would be very unrealistic, but I don't want readers to finish my novels feeling depressed, so I like to finish on a positive note.'

And finally what is his key to success? According to Darren the most important thing is to have a great team of friends and family behind you to help you and support you. 'I am lucky to have a very supportive and understanding family and numerous friends, who have been fantastic and helped by reading endless drafts of my work and giving very honest comments on it. I couldn't have done any of it without them.'

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