7 a Read the extracts from an interview with Rageh Omar, a foreign correspondent. Fill the gaps with these questions.

a) What was your best experience?

b) What advice do you have for those starting out?

c) What was your first salary?

d) What was your first job?

e) How did you become interested in journalism?

Rageh Omar

Foreign correspondent



1 _____

I first became interested in my teens. I'm originally from Somalia and lots of my family have travelled far and wide, throughout Africa, the Middle East and Europe.
I saw journalism as a really good way of getting out into the world and, as someone who was born in Somalia, educated in the west and is a Muslim, I feel at home in several different cultures.

2 _____

I wangled my way into a month's traineeship at the *Voice* newspaper in Brixton but my first real job in journalism was as a stringer for the BBC in Ethiopia. I really didn't want to go back into education, so I went out to Ethiopia in May 1991 with £800 in my pocket in the hope of getting some work. BBC Africa said they'd take occasional pieces from me. I came back a year later and was offered a job with the World Service.

3 _____

It's hard to single out one in particular but one moment that was really touching was when we were covering Kosovo along with thousands of other journalists. We were in a village on the border with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, doing a story about a hospital. All the soldiers had left and we were interviewing one of the main surgeons.
After we had switched off the camera, he said that it felt as though we had been with him every night. He had been hiding in a basement there because there was no way of getting into Kosovo and every night he would translate our reports to all the others present. It brought home to me how much responsibility we had.

4 _____

As a stringer I was paid by the piece. I got £45 for each dispatch and £60 for a live radio interview. Each month the BBC would send me out my little cheque with details of how many dispatches I'd done. Obviously it depended on how much news there was around at the time but it was quite tough to survive for that first year, even in Ethiopia.

5 _____

Don't be daunted and don't be shy in any sense. If there's a programme or an organisation you really like, call them, ask to come in and see them. You'd be amazed how often you get a positive response.
You need that chutzpah but also remember it's about integrity and storytelling. You must be able to listen as well as talk and convey the story as accurately as possible.

7b In which paragraph can you find this information?

1 what qualities a foreign correspondent needs to have
2 where Rageh Omar was trained
3 why he decided to be a journalist
4 where he was born
5 when he first went to Ethiopia
6 how he was paid
7 an experience that showed him that journalism was an important job

8 Find words and phrases in the interview that mean the following.

1 got something by clever, and maybe dishonest, methods (paragraph 2)
2 a short period when someone learns about a job (para. 2)
3 to choose one thing from many others (para. 3)
4 made me realise (para. 3)
5 discouraged, worried (para. 5)
6 confidence and courage to do something, especially against authority (para. 5)
7 the quality of being honest and having high moral standards (para. 5)

SPEAKING AND WRITING

9 Work with a partner. One of you witnessed an important news event. Decide together what the event was (e.g., the effect of an earthquake or hurricane on a city).

Student A: you are a reporter. Write five questions about what Student B saw. Then interview him/her.

Student B: you are an eyewitness. Make a few notes about what you saw. Then answer A's questions.

After the interview, write an account of it. Use reported speech.

I asked (Juan) what exactly he had seen. He said ...

The reporter asked me what exactly I had seen.
I said ...

LIVEWORKSHEETS

8-

LIVEWORKSHEETS