

Questions 21–25

Read the text and questions below.

For each question, mark the correct letter A, B, C or D on your answer sheet.

Open-air Theatre

In Britain, the ancient tradition of open-air performances is still alive and well. Cornwall has some of Britain's oldest working theatres, with one open-air theatre actually built into a cliff, a project only recently completed.



Two actors, Dave James and Muriel Thomas, came from London theatres to join a theatre company called Coastline. They now regularly perform in just such a theatre, by the sea. 'One thing about performing outside is we never know what'll happen. For example, if a bird lands on stage, we can't act as if it's not there – the audience are all watching it. So we just bring the bird into the play, too. Once, about 30 dolphins came past, jumping out of the water and showing off. The audience were all chatting about them instead of watching the play, so the actors just gave up for a while and watched the dolphins, too.'

The weather can also be difficult. 'Sometimes it's been so bad,' says Muriel, 'that we've asked the audience if they really want to stay. But usually they sit with their coats and umbrellas and say, "Yes, please carry on!" They must feel it isn't much fun, but no one's returned their ticket so far!'

Coastline's director, John Barnack, works hard to introduce people to theatre. 'Many people think of theatres as clubs where they don't belong and are not welcome,' he explains. 'Sitting in the open air changes that feeling. The audience are far more involved – they aren't sitting in the dark, at a distance like in normal theatres, and that improves the actors' performances, too. I'm very proud of the work they've done so far.'

21 What is the writer trying to do in the text?

- A follow the development of open-air theatre in Britain
- B describe how one open-air theatre was built
- C explain what it's like to work in an open-air theatre
- D warn readers about the disadvantages of attending open-air performances

22 When plays are disturbed by local wildlife, the actors

- A change their performance to include it.
- B carry on as though nothing had happened.
- C stop and have a chat with the audience.
- D cancel the rest of the performance.

23 What is the audience's attitude to bad weather during performances?

- A They worry about the actors getting wet.
- B They say that it stops them enjoying the play.
- C They accept it as they have come well-prepared.
- D They feel they should have their money back.

24 What does John Barnack say about outdoor theatre?

- A He's afraid the atmosphere is more stressful for actors.
- B He's happy that the audience feel comfortable being there.
- C He's worried that it creates an atmosphere similar to a club.
- D He welcomes the distance it creates between actors and audience.

25 What would an actor from the Coastline company write in his or her diary?

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| A | A difficult performance today – it was pouring with rain. Luckily the audience couldn't see my face in the dark... |
| B | The theatre looks so old it's hard to imagine they've just finished it. I'd prefer to be by the sea while I'm performing, though... |
| C | I'm glad I moved from the London theatre scene. But I don't think our director is satisfied with what we've done so far... |
| D | I'm keeping a tradition going, and it tests my acting skills, as I never know what unexpected things I'll have to deal with... |