The Romance of A Busy Broker (True–False)

Read the text. Then decide if the statements are true (T) or false (F).

The Romance of a Busy Broker

Pitcher, a clerk in the office of Harvey Maxwell, broker, allowed a look of mild interest to visit his usually expressionless face when his employer quickly entered at half past nine accompanied by his young lady stenographer. With a quick "Good-morning, Pitcher," Maxwell hurried to his desk and then dived into the great pile of letters and telegrams waiting there for him.

The young lady had been Maxwell's stenographer for a year. Pitcher noticed a difference in her ways this morning. Instead of going straight to her desk, she was absent-mindedly moving around the office. Once she approached Maxwell's desk, near enough for him to notice her presence.

The machine sitting at that desk was no longer a man; it was a busy New York broker, moved by wheels and springs.

"Well—what is it? Anything?" asked Maxwell sharply. He looked at her impatiently.

"Nothing," answered the stenographer, moving away with a little smile.

This day was Harvey Maxwell's busy day. The desk telephone had a chronic attack of ringing. Messenger boys ran in and out with messages and telegrams. The clerks in the office jumped about like sailors during a storm. Even Pitcher's face looked more lively.

The broker was working like a machine. Stocks and bonds, loans and mortgages – here was a world of finance, and there was no room in it for the human world or the world of nature.

When the lunch hour drew near, the tumult had slightly quietened down.

Maxwell stood by his desk with his hands full of telegrams, and a pen behind his right ear.

Through the window came the delicate, sweet odour of lilac that made the broker for a moment immovable. This odour belonged to Miss Leslie. It brought her image before his eyes. And she was in the next room—twenty steps away.

"I'll do it now," said Maxwell, half aloud. "I'll ask her now. I wonder I didn't do it long ago."

He hurried into the inner office and grabbed the desk of the stenographer.

She looked up at him with a smile. Maxwell was still holding papers with both hands and the pen was behind his ear.

"Miss Leslie," he began hurriedly, "I have but a moment to spare. I want to say something in that moment. Will you be my wife? I haven't had time to show you my love in the ordinary way, but I really do love you. Talk quick, please. "

"Oh, what are you talking about?" exclaimed the young lady.

"Don't you understand?" said Maxwell, impatiently. "I want you to marry me. I love you, Miss Leslie. I wanted to tell you, and I grabbed a minute when things had quietened down a bit. They're calling me for the phone now. Tell them to wait a minute, Pitcher. Won't you, Miss Leslie?"

The stenographer at first seemed overcome with amazement; then tears flowed from her eyes; and then she smiled through them, and one of her arms touched the broker's neck tenderly.

"I know now," she said, softly. "It's this old business that has driven everything else out of your head for the time. I was frightened at first. Don't you remember, Harvey? We were married yesterday evening at 8 o'clock in the Little Church Around the Corner."

Adapted from The Romance of a Busy Broker by O'Henry

Pitcher is a person who easily shows his emotions. Select an option

The stenographer's behaviour was not the same as usual. Select an option

The stenographer wanted Mr Maxwell to notice her presence. Select an option

Mr Maxwell did not mind Miss Leslie interrupting his work. Select an option

Miss Leslie's odour made Mr Maxwell forget about his work for a short while. Select an option

Mr Maxwell wanted Miss Leslie to answer his question immediately. Select an option

Miss Leslie showed no emotions towards Mr Maxwell. Select an option

Mr Maxwell was too busy to remember an important event in his life. Select an option

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Exercise 1

Complete the text with the correct forms of the words in brackets.

- More and more young people are having **(DIFFICULT)** _____ finding jobs today. This also applies to highly _____ **(EDUCATE)** people who have completed university courses. This is because the economy isn't very strong and fewer companies are employing. 'We can't find a good job anywhere. It's _____ **(RIDICULE)**,' said Jo Kars (20). 'Not even as shop assistants. I feel _____ **(ABSOLUTE)** hopeless sometimes and wonder why I went to university.' Kim Lee (24), an accessories designer, hasn't worked in fashion for two years. 'It's crazy! We spend so much time studying and learning as teenagers. I always dreamed of becoming _____ **(SUCCESS)** in fashion design – the subject I studied – but so far it hasn't happened and I don't think it ever will.' Catherine Meyers (21), however, isn't too upset. 'I trained to be a nurse but now work in a bookshop. At first, I was _____ **(ANNOY)** but now I enjoy helping people find the right book. It's not what I imagined I'd be doing in my life, but at least it's a job.'

LIVEWORKSHEETS