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Exam Skills Trainer

Reading

Exam Strategy

In a multiple-choice task, at least one of the incorrect options is usually 'almost' correct. If you are undecided between two options, decide which one is the closest to what is said in the text.

1 Read the Strategy. Then read the questions followed by the text. Which option is correct according to the text? Which options seem correct at first? Why aren't they correct?

Stephen bent down to pick up the fork, and when he stood up, he banged his head on the edge of the cupboard. It was not a light tap, but a powerful blow that nearly knocked him back down to the floor. Just managing to stay upright, he held his head with both hands and let out a shout. It wasn't pain he felt so much as surprise and, even more, anger with himself. When would he learn to be more careful?

- 1 The blow to Stephen's head
 - A knocked him down.
 - B almost made him fall down.
 - C happened as a result of falling down.
 - D occurred after he had fallen down.
- 2 What did Stephen feel as a result of the blow?
 - A extreme frustration
 - B extreme pain
 - C no pain at all
 - D embarrassment

2 Now read the extract from a story. Circle the correct answer (A–D).

The Pennine Way is a 469-kilometre walking path which runs from the Peak District in Derbyshire to just inside the Scottish border. Other trails go further, but it is known as the most challenging. This is because of the nature of the landscape, which is hilly, rocky and often very muddy. Some people see this trail as an opportunity to take a pleasant day's hike on a small section of the route, but eighteen-year-old David Lemming saw it as a challenge. 'I'd come across a great account of hiking the whole trail, written a few years ago, and I was determined to do it myself. A friend was going with me, but he changed his mind. So I promised my parents I'd check in daily on my mobile, and I'd also post pictures on my social media page. I didn't feel anxious – I was just excited to get going.'

Things went perfectly for the first week. David made good progress and was really enjoying the experience. Since many people use the trail, he was constantly meeting fellow hikers, so he never felt isolated. 'But then it got really stormy,' he says, 'so a lot of people gave up. I could go for hours without seeing anyone at all. But as long as I had my mobile, I wasn't really worried about anything bad happening.'

Unfortunately, something bad did happen. During a particularly heavy rain storm, David slipped in the mud, went off the edge of the trail and fell about ten metres down the hill. 'I realised I'd

broken my arm immediately, but I knew my location and thought I could still call for help. Then I found that my mobile had fallen out of my pocket. And when I tried to get up to look for it, I couldn't stand up at all. My leg was injured too.'

All he could do was to shout for help. 'I yelled until my throat was sore,' he says. 'And nothing happened. But then I saw a head at the top of the hill – someone had heard me. A man came down, saw the state I was in and called for help. And really, that was the most amazing part of the whole experience. At the hospital, even the doctors were impressed at how much of the trail I'd covered. I felt really proud. Will he try to walk the trail again? 'Absolutely,' he says. 'It's a fantastic place, and nothing can keep me away.'

- 1 The Pennine Way is
 - A the longest trail in Britain.
 - B located mainly in Scotland.
 - C not popular with inexperienced walkers.
 - D considered a difficult trail to walk.
- 2 Where did David get the idea of hiking the trail?
 - A from reading about it
 - B from his parents
 - C from hearing an account of it
 - D from being challenged by a friend
- 3 How did David get help after his accident?
 - A He called for help on his mobile.
 - B He spoke to a passer-by.
 - C He called out until someone heard him.
 - D He returned to the trail and found someone.
- 4 What is the best title for the article?
 - A A Foolish Adventure
 - B How a Mobile Saved a Boy's Life
 - C Near Tragedy, But No Regrets
 - D Fear and Tragedy on the Pennine Way

Listening

Exam Strategy

When doing a gapfill task, you will sometimes be able to use the exact words that the speaker uses. Often, however, you will have to paraphrase what the speaker says by using fewer words to express the same meaning.

3 Read the Strategy above. Then read the extracts from five different recordings and complete the missing words in the sentences.

- Liam I made a big effort to meet new people and form new friendships.
- Sally I'm sorry, but I'd rather not empty the rubbish bins right now.
- Arlo We had the time of our life in Paris.
- Julia I'll have a word with the nurse.
- Marty I hate the fact that my bedroom has purple walls!