

Name:

Reading

1 Read the text. For questions 1–5, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Joe stared at the clock from up close. With his fingers, he traced the hands to find the time. It was past midnight and the rain had been beating against his window for hours. He felt very alone there in the dark. It felt unnatural to have the curtains open at night. It made him feel as if the stormy night sky was watching him. The electricity had gone off at about half past ten and, since then, he had been sitting in the dark with just the dim light from the few distant street lamps filtering through the glass. It was not pitch black exactly, and once his eyes had got used to the dark, he was surprised at how much he could see. Then, every few minutes, a flash of lightning lit up his room and, for a moment, he saw his furniture in a bright white light, like in an over-exposed photograph.

Soon after the power failed, logic had told Joe to go to sleep, although it was early. If he could just fumble his way to bed and climb in, he would wake up in the morning and find that everything was back to normal. At least there would be daylight so that he could carry on his business fairly normally. But there was no way he could sleep. Joe had only just moved into this flat. It was the first time he had lived alone, and he had spent the first few days in a state of great excitement. This was his place. He loved the fact that it was his own – he even loved the beaten-up old furniture and the squeaky floorboards. They gave the place character, he thought. But now, on his third night there, the excitement had disappeared in an instant when the lights went out. The darkness had taken away the thrill and left him with something he did not feel at all comfortable with, and he couldn't even sleep it away.

He had been writing emails when the lights went out. He had only just connected the computer and he was telling people about his new place. When the screen went blank, he had thought it was a problem with the computer until he realised it was the power. For a few minutes, he stared at the dark shape of the monitor. It was his lifeline. Everyone knew that Joe was into emails and messaging in a big way. If you wanted Joe, the best way to get him was to send him a message. He wasn't very good on the phone. And now, as he looked at the monitor, he couldn't help thinking of it as dead. And he felt the same sharp sense of loss as if someone had died. In fact, for Joe, everyone had died because they were all inside that box of electronic components.

Joe had an overpowering need to talk to someone, but he had tried the phone and that was dead too. He sat looking around the room trying to remember how much he had loved this place just two hours ago. Suddenly, he heard the bleep of his mobile phone. The blue light from the tiny screen illuminated the whole room. He had sent two or three text messages earlier, but he hadn't had enough battery to phone anyone. Now, at least, someone had replied. As he eagerly picked up the mobile, it glowed in his hand. He read, 'Hi Joe. Having a great time thanks. See you tomorrow!' then a bleep, then another message, 'Battery Low'. Then the mobile died too – his last contact with the outside world. A world that was carrying on as if nothing had happened.

It was too late, and too wet, to go out. He had lectures the next morning and he tried to imagine seeing his fellow students and everything being normal. But it was difficult because

Joe's world was closing in on him. A crack of thunder shook the glass in the windows and made him jump. How much longer would he have to sit here alone?

1 How did Joe know what time it was?

- A He felt the clock with his hands.
- B He was wearing a watch.
- C He knew exactly how long it had been raining.
- D He could just see the clock in the darkness.

2 Just before the lights went out, Joe had been

- A beginning to regret moving to his flat.
- B thinking of making some big changes to his home.
- C on his way to bed.
- D very satisfied with his new environment.

3 What upset Joe most when the computer stopped working?

- A He had just received some bad news.
- B There was no power to test if it was working properly.
- C He couldn't communicate with anyone.
- D He was worried that he might have to replace it.

4 After Joe received the message on his mobile, what did he feel?

- A the need to reply before the battery died
- B anger that his friends wouldn't help him
- C concern that he was in danger
- D that no one knew how unhappy he was

5 How did Joe's mood change as a result of the power cut?

- A He rapidly went from being happy to being lonely.
- B He got angry with himself because he was unprepared.
- C He became excited at the chance to see his home in a new light.
- D He began to feel that the rain was going to cause serious damage.

