



GIA SƯ CHUNG CƯ

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WIMBLEDON

There is a definite buzz to Wimbledon in July. This is the “village” where Londoners celebrate both the sun and their proud lawn tennis roots. When you see the crowds streaming into the streets wearing sunglasses, summery dresses and straw hats, it’s like an official decree from the Queen herself: the long awaited British summer has rolled in.

Up until 6 July, there is only one reason to come to Wimbledon: tennis. Over one fortnight in June and July, the world’s top-seeded players fight it out in a grass court for the prestigious trophies. The atmosphere is electric. Famous faces dot the crowds, English flags wave for the players and vendors do a steady trade in strawberries and cream, which has come to be the official food of the Championships.

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It is possible to get a ticket for Wimbledon on the day of the match. Get up and get there as early as possible. Day-of-play tickets are sold on strictly one-per-person queuing basis. Queues can be extremely long and your position in the queue cannot be reserved by equipment, you must be there in person!

If you've missed the Championships, make up for it with a visit to the award-winning Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum. The museum offers a glimpse of how the gentle game of lawn tennis, once all the rage on the lawns of Victorian England and with origins that go far back to Medieval Royal Tennis, has become a multi-million dollar professional sport.

The museum offers wonderful views over Centre Court. You'll find memorabilia donated from famous players and great footage of past matches, as well as art and artifacts that bring the excitement of the sport to life.

Visitors also partake in the other game in Wimbledon: walking. Take a picnic on one of Wimbledon's many green areas. Wimbledon Common covers about 1,140 acres of woodland, heath land and mown recreation areas. Ten ponds promote a variety of bird, animal and plant life. The entire area is unfenced and is open to the public 24-hours a day throughout the year.

Shopaholics should head for the 320,000 square foot shopping centre at Centre Court, Wimbledon – the heart of Wimbledon retail. Three floors, with 62 shops and food outlets offer visitors a plethora of pleasant shopping. It's also a convenient place to purchase memorabilia or to get a snack and stock up on provisions before the big match at the Wimbledon Tennis Grounds.

If you wish to seek out a bit of quiet time perhaps to meditate and think winning thoughts for your chosen tennis player hopeful, the first Buddhist temple in the UK is the place to visit. Four peaceful acres encompass an imposing temple, ornamental lake, a small grove, flower garden and orchard.

1. Wimbledon is a famous place in England where you can _____.
 - A. see fashionably dressed people.
 - B. celebrate the beginning of summer.
 - C. buy strawberries and cream.
 - D. watch tennis matches.
2. Tennis Championship _____.
 - A. is officially announced by the Queen.
 - B. takes place over one fortnight.
 - C. is a close event.
 - D. is the time when Londoners celebrate the sun.

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3. In paragraph 2 "day-of-play" means that _____.
A. one person can buy many tickets for the match.
B. you can get a ticket on the day of the match.
C. you can book a ticket on the day of the match.
D. you must queue for a while.
4. In the Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum you can _____.
A. trace the history of tennis.
B. play tennis.
C. become a multi-million dollar professional.
D. see famous players.
5. Wimbledon Common is _____.
A. a private area.
B. rich in flora and fauna.
C. another game in Wimbledon.
D. just a picnic area.
6. Where can you have a meal?
A. at the Wimbledon Tennis Grounds.
B. at Centre Court.
C. at Wimbledon Common.
D. at Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum.
7. The Buddhist temple _____.
A. is the only place to visit in Wimbledon.
B. is the place for religious people.
C. is a beautiful place to visit and meditate.
D. is the fourth in the UK.

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Although I left university with a good degree, I suddenly found that it was actually quite hard to find a job. After being unemployed for a few months, I realised I had to take the first thing that came along or I'd be in serious financial difficulties. And so, for six very long months, I became a market research telephone interviewer.

I knew it wasn't the best company in the world when they told me that I'd have to undergo three days of training before starting work, and that I wouldn't get paid for any of it. Still, I knew that the hourly rate when I actually did start full time would be a lot better than unemployment benefit, and I could work up to twelve hours a day, seven days a week if I wanted. So, I thought of the money I'd earn and put up with three days of unpaid training. Whatever those three days taught me – and I can't really remember anything about them today – I wasn't prepared for the way I would be treated by the supervisors.

It was worse than being at school. There were about twenty interviewers like myself, each sitting in a small, dark booth with an ancient computer and a dirty telephone. The booths were around the walls of the fifth floor of a concrete office block, and the supervisors sat in the middle of the room, listening in to all of our telephone interviews. We weren't allowed to talk to each other, and if we took more than about two seconds from ending one phone call and starting another, they would shout at us to hurry up and get on with our jobs. We even had to ask permission to go to the toilet. I was amazed how slowly the day went. Our first break of the day came at eleven o'clock, two hours after we started. I'll always remember that feeling of despair when I would look at my watch thinking, "It must be nearly time for the break", only to find that it was quarter to ten and that there was another hour and a quarter to go. My next thought was always, "I can't believe I'm going to be here until nine o'clock tonight."

It wouldn't have been so bad if what we were doing had been useful. But it wasn't. Most of our interviews were for a major telecommunications company. We'd have to ring up businesses and ask them things like, "Is your telecoms budget more than three million pounds a year?" The

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chances are we'd get the reply, "Oh, I don't think so. I'll ask my husband. This is a corner shop. We've only got one phone." And so the day went on.

The most frightening aspect of the job was that I was actually quite good at it. "Oh no!" I thought. "Maybe I'm destined to be a market researcher for the rest of my life." My boss certainly seemed to think so. One day – during a break, of course – she ordered me into her office. "Simon," she said, "I'm promoting you. From tomorrow, you're off telecoms and onto credit card complaints. I'm sure you can handle it. There's no extra pay, but it is a very responsible position."

Three weeks later I quit. It was one of the best decisions I've ever made.

1. Why did the writer become a market research telephone interviewer?
 - A. He had completely run out of money.
 - B. He had the right university degree for the job.
 - C. It was the first job he was offered.
 - D. He knew it was only for six months.
2. The writer had doubts about the company when _____.
 - A. they only offered him three days of training.
 - B. they told him he wouldn't receive payment for his training.
 - C. they told him he had to be trained first.
 - D. he was told what the hourly rate would be.
3. His workplace could best be described as _____.
 - A. large and noisy.
 - B. silent and dirty.
 - C. untidy and crowded.
 - D. old-fashioned and uncomfortable.
4. How did he feel when he realised it wasn't time for the break yet?
 - A. He felt that he would have to go home early.
 - B. He felt that he wouldn't survive to the end of the day.
 - C. He felt that the end of the day seemed so long away.
 - D. He felt that he must have made a mistake.
5. What would have made the job more bearable?
 - A. knowing that he was carrying out a valuable service
 - B. being able to phone much larger companies
 - C. not having to talk to shopkeepers
 - D. not having to ring up businesses
6. What was unusual about Simon's promotion?
 - A. It showed how good he was at his job.
 - B. It meant he would be phoning different people.
 - C. It involved greater responsibility.
 - D. There was no increase in salary.

7. What would be the most suitable title for this extract?

- A. Typical Office Life
- B. Unpleasant Employment
- C. How To Earn a Decent Salary
- D. You Get What You Deserve



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GETTING AWAY FROM IT ALL

Somewhere around February it begins. The drizzle is coming down outside and the kids are bored on a Saturday afternoon. It's usually then that my husband decides it is time to plan our summer holiday. Out come the brochures and the discussion begins.

It's not that we're an argumentative family, but it seems that where we are to spend two weeks in the summer relaxing brings out the worst in us. Before too long, we're all insisting on places and refusing others, the volume steadily increasing. My daughter discovers a lifelong ambition to go to India. Funny how she never mentioned it before. My son isn't going anywhere unless he can bring his dog and my husband doesn't mind where he goes as long as it's within five miles of a golf course.

As usual, it's left to someone, and guess who, to find somewhere that everybody is willing to accept (the dog goes to the neighbours, though). This can take some weeks of persuading, reminding and convincing on my part, but usually there's a solution. Then it's time to plan the packing. It seems that everybody else believes that it can be done half an hour before we leave for the airport. My husband lays out things he wants to take and I put them back when he's not looking and get out the real holiday clothes. My daughter wants to take everything she owns. Each item she has to put back is the subject of another argument.

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Finally the day arrives and we get to the airport in plenty of time. This happens because I start to shout five hours earlier that we are going in five minutes, ready or not. Once at the airport, we check in. It sounds simple enough, but the thing is that airports are full of people running around who don't know where to go. Not surprising since we only do it once a year and we've forgotten where we went last time. We finally find the right desk, get rid of the bags and go through to the departure lounge.

Somewhere around here I can finally think about relaxing. Not for me the cold sweats, shaking, and nervous wondering about the plane. Everything is somebody else's problem. If there's something wrong with the plane, the pilot can worry about it. If a passenger has a heart attack, the stewards can worry about it.

And so begin two weeks of relaxation. I learned long ago that the only way to do it is to stop being called "Mum". For those two weeks, whenever I hear the word I look around as if it refers to someone else. I ignore any question that begins with "Where's my...". The funny thing is that they always find it anyway. The only thing I worry about is which book I'm going to take to the pool. My husband follows a ball around a course, my kids do whatever kids do these days and I become myself again for a short while.

1. The writer implies that her family _____.
 - A. find it hard to agree on anything.
 - B. all have very different personalities.
 - C. don't usually fight over things.
 - D. don't care about each other's feelings.
2. The writer thinks her daughter's ambition to go to India is _____.
 - A. not as strong as she claims.
 - B. amusing in a girl her age.
 - C. strange for someone like her.
 - D. a secret she should have shared.
3. The writer implies that _____.
 - A. her son refuses to go with them.
 - B. the others try to make her agree.
 - C. nobody is really happy with the idea.
 - D. she gets the others to agree.
4. Why does the writer put back the clothes her husband chooses?
 - A. She doesn't like what he wears.
 - B. He forgets to choose things for her.

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- C. He can't decide what to take.
D. The clothes aren't suitable.
5. The writer implies that _____
A. it's not far from her house to the airport.
B. they would be late if she didn't make a fuss.
C. airports are usually badly designed.
D. people should go on holiday more often.
6. The writer thinks she is different from some other people because she _____
A. finds flying an enjoyable experience.
B. doesn't worry about problems.
C. understands what pilots face.
D. doesn't care about other passengers.
7. The writer thinks that her family _____
A. try to stop her from relaxing on holiday.
B. don't recognise her when she's on holiday.
C. don't need her as much as they think.
D. ignore her unless they need something.

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