Reading comprehension

My name's Marko and I'm a lawyer, but I don't actually like it. I think I'd rather be an artist. I've always loved drawing and painting, but when I left school, my parents wanted me to have a 'serious' job so they sent me to university to study law. I didn't really want to go, but I did what they said. I was good at law, so I became a lawyer. Then I got a job in a big law firm. It's OK, but I don't love it.

I recently started going to evening art classes and I really enjoy them. The teacher says I'm quite good and that I could take up art full time if I wanted to. I think I might do that. I could hand in my notice at the law firm and start looking for a job as an artist. I'm not sure though. Being an artist is risky. There's no guarantee of getting a regular salary. Maybe I should just keep art as a hobby.

My girlfriend thinks I should go for it. She says if I don't try, I'll never know if I could have been a successful artist. She says she'll support me whatever happens and that if things get difficult, we can always move into a smaller flat. She's very positive about it all. I'm lucky to have her. My parents aren't so supportive. They're worried that I'll end up with no money and no job. They think I should stay in law because it's a safe career. I don't know who to listen to - my parents or my girlfriend.

I've decided to look ahead and think about the future. When I'm 70, I don't want to look back and wish I'd done something different. I don't want to regret not doing what I really love. So, I'm going to keep on with my art and see how it goes. I'm going to keep to my evening classes and I'm also going to start selling my work online. If people like it, then great; if not, that's OK too. Maybe one day I'll be able to take on art full time.

I've got a lot of thinking to do over the next few months. I need to decide if being an artist is really what I want and if I can put up with the risks. I also need to talk to my boss at the law firm. I don't know how he'll react when I hand in my notice. I hope he doesn't get angry. It would be good if he could give me some advice about becoming an artist. He probably won't though. He's always been very serious and business-like. He's not really interested in things like art and music. Also, he's never liked me much because I'm always late for work. I think he's looking forward to the day when he can fire me.

Anyway, that's my plan. I'm going to take over my life and do what I want to do. I'm not going to let other people decide for me. I just hope I can keep up with the hard work and that I make the right decision.

1. Which title best fits the text?

    A. Why Being a Lawyer is the Safest Career Option
    B. Can Lawyers Be Successful Artists?
    C. Pursuing a Career in Art: A Lawyer's Dilemma

2. Are these sentences true or false?

    A. The narrator's parents wanted them to study art in university.
    B. The narrator is currently working as an artist full-time.
    C. The narrator's girlfriend is supportive of their decision to pursue art.
    D. The narrator's boss at the law firm is very interested in art and music.
    E. The narrator's parents are worried about the narrator's financial stability if they pursue art.
    F. The narrator is considering keeping art as just a hobby.
    G. The narrator is confident that their boss will support their decision to pursue art.
    H. The narrator is unsure about whether they want to become a full-time artist.
    I. The narrator's girlfriend is not supportive of their decision to pursue art.
    J. The narrator is planning to continue with their evening art classes.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

3. Match the phrasal verbs with their definitions.

1 look ahead	**a** return something to the person who gave it to you
2 look back	**b** gain control of something
3 take on	**c** give something to another person
4 keep to	**d** feel excited about something that will happen
5 take after	**e** hire someone for a job
6 put off	**f** give something to someone in authority
7 hand back	**g** delay doing something until later
8 look into	**h** think about things that will happen in the future
9 take up	**i** pass something from one generation to the next
10 hand in	**j** stay at the same level as others
11 keep on	**k** investigate or examine something
12 hand down	**l** start doing a new activity or hobby
13 take over	**m** stick to a plan or promise
14 put up with	**n** think about things that happened in the past
15 keep up with	**o** be like a family member in appearance or behaviour
16 hand over	**p** continue doing something without stopping
17 look forward to	**q** tolerate or accept something unpleasant

4. Fill in the blanks using these phrasal verbs from exercise 3.

1) I decided to _____ painting as a new hobby this year.
2) Don't forget to _____ your homework before the deadline.
3) The teacher will _____ our graded tests tomorrow.
4) Let's not _____ studying for the exam until the last minute.
5) When I _____ on my childhood, I have fond memories.
6) As we graduate, let's _____ to our future careers.
7) Despite the challenges, I plan to _____ learning English.
8) It's important to _____ a schedule when preparing for a test.
9) The company decided to _____ new employees for the busy season.
10) Sarah _____ her mother with her love for gardening.
11) The manager will _____ the project responsibilities to me.
12) My grandmother _____ her favourite recipes to me.
13) I am really _____ meeting my pen pal next month.
14) After the retirement of the CEO, John will _____ the position.
15) It can be challenging to _____ all the changes in technology.
16) Before deciding, we need to _____all possible options.
17) I don't think I can _____ his constant complaining much longer.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

5. Marko went online and posted his dilemma and these are the replies he got. Do you agree with them? Why? Why not?

JAKE

Man, I'm all for following your dreams! I used to work as a lawyer, but I always wanted to be a musician. One day, I finally quit my job and started pursuing music full-time. It was scary at first, but now I couldn't be happier doing what I love.

EMILY

I don't know... I mean, it's great to chase your dreams and all, but you have to be realistic too. I have a friend who quit her stable job to become an actress, and she's been struggling ever since. Sometimes it's not as glamorous as it seems.

MAX

I'm torn on this one. On one hand, I think it's important to be happy in your career. But on the other hand, stability is also crucial. I've always wanted to be a chef, but I'm afraid to leave my current job in finance because of the uncertainty.

SARAH

Oh my gosh, I totally understand how he feels! I used to work in a boring office job, and every day felt like torture. When I finally quit to pursue my passion for painting, it was like a weight had been lifted off my shoulders. You have to follow your heart, no matter what anyone else thinks.

LIVEWORKSHEETS