

READING EXERCISE SUPERIOR 2

Read the article.

Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock, Space Scientist

Born to Nigerian parents in London, my journey to success as a space scientist has not been easy. When I was young, I was moved around a lot because of family problems and ended up going to a total of thirteen different schools. I was also discovered to be dyslexic* and was often placed in the remedial classes*2 as a result. Although I had dreams and ambitions for my future from an early age, when I told teachers that I wanted to become an astronaut and go to the Moon I was encouraged instead to go into nursing, a career which they considered to be more suitable for me.

Fortunately my family, especially my father, gave me a lot of real support and encouraged me to follow my dreams. Without this I may never have succeeded in leaving school with high grades in

A-level maths, physics, chemistry and biology. These results made it possible for me to then face the challenge of doing a physics degree at Imperial College London, which I completed in 1990. After which, I went on to gain a PhD in mechanical engineering.

My career in space science has, over the years, given me opportunities to work on a wide range of exciting projects around the world and I have now become one of the presenters of The Sky at Night, which is a TV programme about astronomy*3. Although I enjoy all the elements of my current work, I am now also keen to encourage more children, particularly girls, into science. It remains a very male-dominated profession even in this day and age. I strongly believe that science can have a huge impact on our lives and know from personal experience that if you have a dream and work hard, you can succeed. I appreciate every day how lucky I am to love the work I do, and I still have a dream to fulfil in my future: to retire to Mars.

*1 A learning difficulty that affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent reading and spelling.

*2 Low-level classes for students unable to keep up with the work in the ordinary classes.

*3 An area of science which studies space.

PART A :Look at the sentences and write true (T) or false (F).

1 Becoming a space scientist came easily to Maggie. _____

2 Maggie's childhood was a stable one. _____

3 Her teachers didn't believe her dream was achievable. _____

4 Before deciding to become a scientist, she had thought about becoming a nurse. _____

5 Without support from her family, Maggie is unlikely to have got the A levels she did. _____

Read the text again and underline the correct answer, a), b), c) or d).



1 In this text, Maggie is describing _____

- a) the journey she took to get where she is today.
- b) the challenges of the profession she works in.
- c) the difficulties she faced at university.
- d) how hard it is for women to become scientists.

2 What does Maggie say about her school days? _____

- a) Her teachers didn't know she was dyslexic.
- b) She spent a lot of time in the lowest class.
- c) Her parents didn't care if she did badly.
- d) She was always put into the top class.

3 When talking about her family, Maggie says that _____

- a) she couldn't have succeeded without them.
- b) they never encouraged her at school.
- c) her mum was her biggest supporter.
- d) her parents wanted her to go into nursing.

4 What does Maggie feel is important in our lives? _____

- a) Getting a job in science
- b) Having the chance to go to university
- c) Following our dreams
- d) Having a passion for life

5 Why does Maggie feel she is lucky? _____

- a) Because she has worked hard and succeeded.
- b) Because she has travelled widely with her job.
- c) Because she has become a TV celebrity.
- d) Because she has a passion for her work.