Section 3

TUTOR: OK, Jim. You wanted to see me about your textile design project.

JIM: That's right. I've been looking at how (1) ……like cotton and wool.

TUTOR: Why did you choose that topic?

JIM: Well, I got a lot of useful ideas from the museum, you know, at that exhibition of textiles. (2) ……Years ago, I went to a carpet shop with my parents when we were on holiday in Turkey, and I remember all the amazing colours.

TUTOR: They might not all have been natural dyes.

JIM: Maybe not, but for the project. I decided to follow it up. And I found a great book about a (3) ……used for dyes.

TUTOR: So in your project, you had to include a practical investigation

JIM: Yeah. (4) ……, I was going to just look at one type of fibre for example, like cotton…

TUTOR: …and see how different types of dyes affected it?

JIM: Yes. Then I decided to include others as well so I looked at cotton and wool and nylon

TUTOR: With just one type of dye?

JIM: Various types, (5) …… TUTOR:

OK.

JIM: So, I did the experiments last week. (6) ……, I found a website which supplied them, they came in just a few days, but I also made some of my own.

TUTOR: That must have taken quite a bit of time.

JIM: Yes, I'd thought it'd just be a matter of a teaspoon or so of dye, and actually that wasn't the case at all. Like I was using one vegetable, beetroot, for a red dye, (7) ……. So it all took longer than I'd expected.

TUTOR: (8) …….

JIM: I did use one. That was a yellow dye, an artificial one

TUTOR: Tartrazine?

JIM: Yeah. I used it on cotton first. It came out a great colour, but (9) ……. I'd been going to try it out on nylon, but I abandoned that idea.

TUTOR: Were you worried about health issues?

JIM: I'd thought if it's a legal food colouring, it must be safe.

TUTOR: Well, (10) ……., I believe.

TUTOR: So what natural dyes did you look at?

JIM: Well, one was turmeric. The colour's great, it's a really strong yellow. It's generally used in dishes like curry.

TUTOR: It's meant to be quite good for your health when eaten, but you might find (11) ……..……- a few washes, and it's gone.

JIM: Right. I used beetroot as a dye for wool. When I chop up beetroot to eat I always end up with bright red hands, (12) ……. Disappointing.

TUTOR: There's a natural dye called Tyrian purple. Have you heard of that?

JIM: Yes. It comes from a shellfish, and it was worn in ancient times but only by important people as it was so rare I didn't use it.

TUTOR: (13) ……one researcher managed to get hold of some recently. (14) ……by chemical dyes nowadays. Did you use any black dyes?

JIM: Logwood. That was quite complicated. I had to prepare the fabric so the dye would take.

TUTOR: I hope you were careful to wear gloves.

JIM: Yes. I know the danger with that dye.

TUTOR: Good. It can be extremely dangerous if it's ingested. Now, (15) ……..……? Like cochineal, for example?

JIM: Yes. I didn't actually make that, I didn't have time to start crushing up insects to get the red colour and anyway they're not available here, but I managed to get the dye quite easily from a website. But it cost a fortune I can see why it's generally just used in cooking, and in small quantities.

TUTOR: Yes, it's very effective, but that's precisely why it's not used as a dye. JIM: I also read about using metal oxide. Apparently you can allow iron to rust while it's in contact with the fabric, and that colours it.

TUTOR: Yes, that works well for dying cotton. But you have to be careful as the metal can actually affect the fabric and so you can't (16) ……in this way. And the colours are quite subtle, not everyone likes them. Anyway it looks as if you've done a lot of work...