Test 2

Section 2

I never really planned to be (1) …… when I came to live in Northsea. I'd been working in London as a website designer, but although that was interesting, I didn't like city life. (2) ……... as a teenager, and I thought if I went to live by the sea, I might be able to (3) …… in my free time, Then I found that the Lifeboat Institution was looking for volunteers, so I decided to apply.

(4) …….. here in Northsea's hard to miss, it's one of the largest in the country. It was built 15 years ago with funds provided by (5)…… who'd lived here all her life. As the Lifeboat Institution is a charity that relies on that kind of donation, rather than (6) ……, that was a huge help to us.

When I applied, I had to (7) ……... The doctors were particularly interested in my vision. I used to be short-sighted, so I'd had to wear glasses, but I'd had (8) …… two years earlier so that was OK. They gave me tests for colour blindness and they thought I might have a problem there, but it turned out I was OK.

When (9) ……., all the volunteers are contacted and rush to the lifeboat station. Our target's to get there in five minutes, then we try to get the boat (10)…… in another six to eight minutes. Our team's proud that we usually achieve that — the average time across the country's eight and a half minutes.

I've recently qualified as what's called a 'helmsman', which means I (11) …… ……. the lifeboat. I have to check that the equipment we use is in working order —the crew have (12) …… that can support up to four people in the water. And it's ultimately my decision whether (13) …….. But it's very rare not to launch it, even in the worst weather.

As well as going out on the lifeboat, my work involves other things too. A lot of people underestimate (14) ……. at sea, so I speak to youth groups and sailing clubs in the area about the sorts of problems that sailors and swimmers can have

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if (15) ……..... We also have a lot of volunteers who organise activities to raise money for us, and we couldn't manage without them.

The training we get is (16) ……..., focusing on technical competence and safe handling techniques, and it's given me the confidence to deal with extreme situations without panicking. I was glad (17) …….. before I started, as that's a big help with the casualty care activities we do. We've done a lot on how to deal with (18) …… — that's an essential skill. After a year, I did a one-week residential course, led by specialists. They had a wave-tank where they could (19)…… — so we could get experience at what to do if the boat turned over in a storm at night, for example.

Since I started, I've had to deal with (20) ……..

But the work's hugely motivating. It's not just about saving lives — I've learned a lot about (21) ……..... My background in IT's been useful here, and I can use my expertise to help other volunteers. They're a great group — we're like a family really, which helps when you're (22) …… on a cold stormy night. But actually, it's the colder months that can be (23) ……..……. That's when the incidents tend to be more serious, and you realise that you can (24)…… to the outcome.

So if any of you listeners are interested . . .

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