

Ex. 5 Reading comprehension

Part 1: Reading Text

The Silent Watchmaker

If you walked past the dusty shop window on High Street too quickly, you would likely miss Mr. Evelyn Thorne entirely. To the casual observer, Mr. Thorne **resembled** a bird more than a man. He was exceptionally tall and thin, with a permanent stoop in his shoulders from years of leaning over tiny gears and springs. His face was sharp and angular, dominated by a pair of thick, round spectacles that magnified his pale blue eyes. Above those eyes sat a mess of unruly white hair that looked as though it had never met a comb. Regardless of the season, he always dressed in the same woolen tweed vest and a white shirt that was inevitably stained with ink or clock oil.

Despite his somewhat chaotic appearance, Mr. Thorne was a man of immense precision. As the town's only watchmaker, he possessed a patience that most people found impossible to understand. He could spend hours staring at a mechanism no larger than a fingernail without moving a muscle. However, this intense focus made him socially awkward. When customers entered his shop, he often greeted them with a grunt rather than a smile, leading many locals to believe he was grumpy or rude. They were often intimidated by his silence, not realizing that he was simply listening to the ticking of the hundreds of clocks on his walls.

His workshop reflected his complex personality. To an outsider, it looked like a disaster zone, with piles of brass gears, old pocket watches, and tools scattered across every surface. Yet, Mr. Thorne knew exactly where everything was. He was **meticulous** about his craft. He treated every broken watch not as a piece of trash, but as a sick patient that needed to be healed. He claimed that every watch had a "heartbeat," and he was the only one who could hear it. This eccentricity was what made him famous in the district; people knew that if Mr. Thorne couldn't fix it, nobody could.

Beneath his gruff exterior and professional obsession, there was a hidden kindness. While he charged wealthy customers high prices for antique restorations, the neighborhood children knew a different side of him. If a child brought in a broken toy or a cheap plastic watch, Mr. Thorne would fix it for free, often adding a small improvement, like a louder bell or a brighter light. He never accepted thanks, merely waving the children away so he could return to his work. It was his silent way of showing that, while he preferred machines to people, he still had a heart of gold.

Part 2: Comprehension Questions

Answer the following questions using full sentences based on the text above.

1. Physical Appearance. Identify three specific details mentioned in the first paragraph regarding Mr. Thorne's physical look.

2. Personality vs. Reputation. Why do the local people think Mr. Thorne is rude, and what is the real reason for his behavior?

3. Vocabulary in Context. Look at the third paragraph. The text says Mr. Thorne was "meticulous." Based on the description of how he works, what do you think this word means?

4. Inference and Detail. According to the final paragraph, how does Mr. Thorne treat wealthy customers differently from the neighborhood children?

5. Descriptive Language. In the first paragraph, the author compares Mr. Thorne to a specific animal. Which animal is it, and why does the author make this comparison?