You are going to read a magazine article about giving advice. Six sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A–G** the one which fits each gap (**37–42**). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet.**

Giving advice

Journalist Nicola Hargreaves discusses whether it's worth giving advice, and if so, how?

'What do *you* think I should do?' asks your friend, as she sits down on your bed, eagerly awaiting your advice. This is no easy situation. Say something your friend disagrees with and you might feel you've disappointed her. Tell her what to do and you risk your friend feeling let down if things don't turn out as you hoped.

It's human nature to want to offer solutions when someone comes to you with a problem. It's also easy to fall into the trap of giving advice which you wouldn't take yourself, or simply reassure your friend that 'everything will be OK.' This is not particularly useful for your friend, and may leave you feeling a bit helpless, too. **37** This is because we're pleased that our friend has come to us for help, even if we don't really think we're qualified to give it. So, is it a good idea to try to give advice at all? The answer is yes... if it's done in the right way.

In fact, friends often really only want someone to listen to them. It's important, therefore, to try to work out whether they're actually seeking advice, or simply wanting to talk over whatever it is that's going round and round in their head. Doing this can, in fact, make people feel better all by themselves. There's no harm in asking whether they'd like you to suggest a solution or two, even so. **38**

It's also important to be honest. **39** Your friend won't be offended, and you can still listen carefully and try to put yourself in their shoes. Then you can go away and think about things. What might you do if you were to experience the same thing? You can go back to your friend later with a few suggestions if you think of something that might be helpful.

40 There's nothing worse than hearing 'What *I* would have said is ...' or 'What you *should* have tried to do is ...' What's done is done and the only thing to do now is look ahead. Judging never helps anyone! If your friend keeps saying 'If only I'd ...', bring them back to the present and encourage them to think about what they can do to sort things out.

Sometimes a problem doesn't go away overnight. **41** They will definitely appreciate it if you just allow them to 'talk it out', though. Maybe they're building up courage to take action, and need to convince themselves they're doing the right thing. Just being there for them whenever they need you may be all you have to do to make things better.

Remember that you don't have to have all the answers, and your friend probably doesn't expect you to. If you're stuck, try reminding your friend of all the great things that are happening in their lives. **42** We often resolve problems when we're engaged in other activities and not directly thinking about them at all!

LIVEWORKSHEETS

A If you're unable to think of a way to resolve the situation your friend finds themselves in, just say so.

B Why not plan some fun things to do together to help them forget what's going on for a while?

C Often we say this kind of thing because we believe we ought to say *something*.

D This is the first thing many of us do when we have a problem ourselves.

E Then it's up to them to say that they want to hear your ideas (or not, as the case may be).

F Can you remember a time when you weren't sure what to do, or thought you'd acted in the wrong way?

G It can be hard to listen to your friend going over and over the same thing without being able to help them.

LIVEWORKSHEETS