

Reading PART 5

A. You are going to read a book review. For questions 31-36 choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

The Great Indoors: At Home in the Modern British House

In 1910 the music hall comedian Billy Williams scored his biggest hit with the song *When Father Papered the Parlour*, mocking the incompetence of the amateur home decorator. Fifty years later, comedians Norman Wisdom and Bruce Forsyth were still entertaining millions on the TV show *Sunday Night at the London Palladium* with a similar routine, but the joke was starting to look dated. The success of magazines such as *The Practical Householder* was already proving that, as the 1957 Ideal Home Exhibition proclaimed, "Do-it-yourself is a home hobby that is here to stay."

By this stage, Britain had mostly completed its transition from primitive housing conditions, made bearable - for those who could afford it - by servants and handymen, into a world where families looked after themselves in highly serviced environments. Recognisably modern technology, in the form of telephones, televisions and electricity, had become ubiquitous and was to transform domestic living still further in the coming years. The makeover of British homes in the twentieth century is recounted in Ben Highmore's entertaining and informative new book. He takes us on a whirlwind tour of an everyday house, from entrance hall to garden shed, illuminated by extensive reference to oral histories, popular magazines and personal memoirs.

At its centre, though, is the way that our homes have reflected wider social changes. There is the decline of formality, so that living rooms once full of heavy furniture and Victorian knick-knacks are now dominated by television screens and littered with children's toys. There is a growing internationalism in taste. And there is the rise of domestic democracy, with the household radiogram and telephone (located in the hall) now replaced by iPads, laptops and mobiles in virtually every room. Key to that decentralisation of the home - and the implied shift of power within it - is the advent of central heating, which gets pride of place as the innovation that allowed the whole house to become accessible at all times of day and night. Telling an unruly child to 'go to your room' no longer seems much of a threat.

Highmore also documents, however, some less successful steps in the onward march of domestic machinery. Whatever happened to the gas-powered fridges we were promised in 1946? Or to the Dishmaster a decade later that promised to do "a whole day's washing up in just three minutes"? Rather more clear is the reason why a 1902 Teasmade failed to catch on: "when the alarm clock triggered the switch, a match was struck, lighting a spirit stove under the kettle". You don't have to be a health and safety fanatic to conclude that a bedroom isn't the ideal place for such a gadget. Equally disturbing to the modern reader is the prewar obsession with children getting fresh air. It was a belief so entrenched that even a voice of dissent merely argued that in winter, "The healthy child only needs about three hours a day in the open air, as long as the day and night nursery windows are always open." Nowadays, the fresh air obsession has been replaced by irrational fears of horrors outside the home. It's easier to laugh at the foibles of the past, and Highmore doesn't always resist a sense of modern superiority, though, for the most part, he's an engaging and quirky guide, dispensing sociological insights without jargon.

The message is that even the language of the home has changed irrevocably: airing cupboards are going

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the same way as drawing rooms. As for that Billy Williams song, "By the 1980s", Highmore writes, "it would be impossible for anyone to imagine their front room as a 'parlour' without seeming deeply old-fashioned." He's not entirely correct, for there was at least one person who was still employing such terminology. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher sold her message with the use of what she called 'the parables of the parlour', which suggests she understood the truth that, despite the catalogue of changes, there is a core that seems consistent. A 1946 edition of *Housewife* magazine spelt it out: "men make houses, women make homes". When you watch a male comedian today doing a routine about his wife's attachment to scatter cushions, it seems worth asking: has the family dynamic really moved a great deal?

31 The reviewer's main topic in the first paragraph is
A improvements in home decorating skills.
B how common it was for home decorating to be discussed.
C how unfair descriptions of home decorating used to be.
D a change in attitudes to home decorating.

32 In the second paragraph, the reviewer says that the book includes evidence illustrating
A that some British people's homes were transformed more than others.
B the widespread nature of changes that took place in British homes.
C the perceived disadvantages of certain developments in British homes.
D that the roles of certain people in British homes changed enormously.

33 In the third paragraph, the reviewer points to a change in
A the extent to which different parts of the house are occupied.
B ideas of which parts of a house should be furnished in a formal way.
C how much time children spend in their own rooms.
D beliefs about what the most pleasant aspect of home life is.

34 The reviewer suggests in the fourth paragraph that
A most unsuccessful inventions failed because they were dangerous.
B various unsuccessful inventions failed because they did not work properly.
C some unsuccessful inventions were not advertised appropriately.
D there were unsuccessful inventions which might have been good ideas.

35 In the fifth paragraph, the reviewer says that in his book, Highmore
A sometimes focuses on strange ideas that were not very common in the past.
B occasionally applies the standards of today to practices in the past.
C occasionally expresses regret about how some attitudes have changed.
D sometimes includes topics that are not directly relevant to the main topic.

36 In the final paragraph, the reviewer suggests that Highmore may be wrong about
A when certain modern attitudes to home life first developed.
B which changes in home life in Britain have been most widely welcomed.
C the extent to which home life in Britain has changed.
D how common terms such as 'airing cupboards' are in modern Britain.

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B. You are going to read a newspaper article about management. For questions 31-36, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Simply ticking the boxes isn't enough

I have been asked what I think about the idea of 'Investing in People'. The best answer I can give is that I think that what it tries to achieve - basically making the link between business improvement and focusing on the needs of the people who work for an organisation - is great. My problem is with organisations who subscribe to it as a way to help them 'get better', when they don't bother to understand where they went wrong in the first place. They need to ask what explicit and implicit policies and procedures they have in place that prevent their people from being able to do the right thing for the right reasons.

I am sure that there are managers out there who don't know any better, and assume that to manage they simply need to put pressure on their people to perform. But people don't demonstrate high performance because they are told to. They do it because they see the need to do it, and make the choice to do so. They do it because they are connected to the business goals and they see how their contributions can help achieve them. Such managers may tell themselves they can put a 'tick' in the 'we care about people' box. But simply putting ticks in boxes is no good if it doesn't reflect reality.

I know of a company that was so concerned that its people were doing the 'right thing' that it put in place a series of metrics to measure their effectiveness. So far, so good. But one of the objectives - making successful sales calls - manifested itself in the metric 'Number of potential customers seen in one day'. The sales people obviously focused their efforts on going from one customer's office to another, and not on closing deals. Instead of the employees becoming more effective, they focused on getting the boxes ticked. Good intent; poor thinking.

Another company wanted to improve the speed with which it was able to introduce new products. Competition was beating it to the market place, and consequently the company was losing market share. Senior management sent out the message to reduce the time spent in getting products into customers' hands, with the explanation that they couldn't afford delays. This was a relatively easy task, especially since the time spent testing the products was cut in half to accomplish the time reduction. The result was new products were introduced in less time than those of the competition - but soon rejected by customers for poor quality. Good intent; reckless implementation.

A third company I know is trying hard to help employees see that they have some control over their future. The company instituted a programme with a title like 'Creating our own future' or something like that. A good idea; get the people involved in the future of the company. But instead of the employees becoming motivated to contribute, they saw it as a hollow exercise on the part of senior management who, in the past, had paid little attention to anything other than getting the job done so they could report great earnings. Yes, the programme was a big 'tick the box' effort, but that was all it was in the minds of the people that it was designed for.

A final example is of a company that brought in one of these 'Investing in People' programmes to change the way the company was run. Assessors were running around like crazy, helping managers examine how they managed. They told managers how they could manage better. And when the programme was over, the company was able to say they had done it - it had invested in its people and life was now good. But the managers simply went back to business as usual. After all, the assessors were gone, and they had targets to hit.

All these examples are representative of senior management who see the need to improve things in their organisation, but don't see how to do it. For a start, a programme targeted at improving things is only as good

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as management's ability to motivate their people. And when the employees simply see the programme as a box-ticking exercise, then it's hopeless.

31 The writer thinks that putting the concept of 'Investing in People' into practice
A frequently results in confusion among the people it is supposed to help.
B involves more effort than some organisations are prepared to make.
C may create problems where previously there had not been any problems.
D is something that some organisations should not attempt to do.

32 The writer's main point in the second paragraph is that the performance of employees
A may be very good even if management is poor.
B cannot be accurately measured by any box-ticking exercise.
C is related to their knowledge of the organisation as a whole.
D is not as unpredictable as some managers believe it to be.

33 What point does the writer make about the first company he describes?
A It was not really interested in measuring the effectiveness of employees.
B The targets that it set for staff were unrealistic.
C It failed to understand the real needs of its employees.
D The data that it collected did not measure what it was supposed to measure.

34 What point does the writer make about the second company he describes?
A It made what should have been an easy task into a complicated one.
B It failed to foresee the consequences of an instruction.
C It misunderstood why a new approach was required.
D It refused to take into account the views of employees.

35 What does the writer say about the programme introduced by the third company he mentions?
A Employees did not believe that it had been introduced for their benefit.
B Employees felt that it was in fact a way of making their jobs even
C The reason given for introducing it was not the real reason why it was introduced.
D It was an inappropriate kind of programme for this particular organisation.

36 The writer says that the programme in his final example
A was too demanding for managers to maintain long-term.
B was treated as a self-contained exercise by managers.
C involved some strange ideas on how managers could improve.
D caused managers to believe that their previous methods had been better.

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C. You are going to read an extract from a novel. For questions 31-36, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Thirty or so years after he arrived in London, Chanu decided that it was time to see the sights. "All I saw was the Houses of Parliament. And that was in 1979." It was a project. Much equipment was needed. Preparations were made. Chanu bought a pair of shorts which hung just below his knees. He tried them on and filled the numerous pockets with a compass, guidebook, binoculars, bottled water, maps and two types of disposable camera. Thus loaded, the shorts hung at mid-calf. He bought a baseball cap and wore it around the flat with the visor variously angled up and down and turned around to the back of his head. A money belt secured the shorts around his waist and prevented them from reaching his ankles. He made a list of tourist attractions and devised a star rating system that encompassed historical significance, something he termed 'entertainment factor' and value for money. The girls would enjoy themselves. They were forewarned of this requirement.

On a hot Saturday morning towards the end of July the planning came to fruition. "I've spent more than half my life here," said Chanu, "but I've hardly left these few streets." He stared out of the bus windows at the grimy colours of Bethnal Green Road. "All this time I have been struggling and struggling, and I've barely had time to lift my head and look around."

They sat at the front of the bus, on the top deck. Chanu shared a seat with Nazneen, and Shahana and Bibi sat across the aisle. Nazneen crossed her ankles and tucked her feet beneath the seat to make way for the two plastic carrier bags that contained their picnic. "You'll stink the bus out," Shahana had said. "I'm not sitting with you." But she had not moved away.

"It's like this," said Chanu, "when you have all the time in the world to see something, you don't bother to see it. Now that we are going home, I have become a tourist". He pulled his sunglasses from his forehead onto his nose. They were part of the new equipment.

He turned to the girls. "How do you like your holiday so far?" Bibi said that she liked it very well, and Shahana squinted and shuffled and leaned her head against the side window.
Chanu began to hum. He danced with his head, which wobbled from side to side, and drummed out a rhythm on his thigh. The humming appeared to come from low down in his chest and melded with the general tune of the bus, vibrating on the bass notes.

Nazneen decided that she would make this day unlike any other. She would not allow this day to disappoint him.
The conductor came to collect fares. He had a slack-jawed expression: nothing could interest him. "Two at one pound, and two children, please," said Chanu. He received his tickets. "Sightseeing," he announced, and flourished his guidebook. "Family holiday."
"Right," said the conductor. He jingled his bag, looking for change. He was squashed by his job. The ceiling forced him to stoop.

"Can you tell me something? To your mind, does the British Museum rate more highly than the National Gallery? Or would you recommend the gallery over the museum?"
The conductor pushed his lower lip out with his tongue. He stared hard at Chanu, as if considering whether to eject him from the bus.
"In my rating system," explained Chanu, "they are neck and neck. It would be good to take an opinion from a local."
"Where've you come from, mate?"
"Oh, just two blocks behind," said Chanu. "But this is the first holiday for twenty or thirty years."
The conductor swayed. It was still early but the bus was hot and Nazneen could smell his sweat. He looked at Chanu's guidebook. He twisted round and looked at the girls. At a half-glance he knew everything about Nazneen, and then he shook his head and walked away.

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31 In what sense was the sightseeing trip a 'project'?
A Chanu felt a duty to do it.
B It was something that Chanu had wanted to do for a long time.
C Chanu took it very seriously.
D It was something that required a good deal of organisation.

32 The descriptions of Chanu's clothing are intended to
A show how little he cared about his appearance.
B create an impression of his sense of humour.
C create amusing visual images of him.
D show how bad his choice of clothes always was.

33 Chanu had decided to go on a sightseeing trip that day because
A he regretted the lack of opportunity to do so before.
B he felt that it was something the girls ought to do.
C he had just developed an interest in seeing the sights.
D he had grown bored with the area that he lived in.

34 As they sat on top of the bus,
A Nazneen began to regret bringing so much food with them.
B the girls felt obliged to pretend that they were enjoying themselves.
C Chanu explained why he had brought the whole family on the trip.
D the family members showed different amounts of enthusiasm for the trip.

35 When Chanu showed him the guidebook, the conductor
A made it clear that he wanted to keep moving through the bus.
B appeared to think that Chanu might cause a problem.
C initially pretended not to have heard what Chanu said.
D felt that he must have misunderstood what Chanu said.

36 What was strange about Chanu's use of the word 'local'?
A It was not relevant to the places he was asking about.
B It could equally have been applied to him.
C He was not using it with its normal meaning.
D He had no reason to believe it applied to the conductor.

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D. You are going to read a newspaper article about trees and leaves. For questions 31-36, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Those brilliant autumn outfits may be saving trees

As trees across the northern areas of the globe turn gold and crimson, scientists are debating exactly what these colours are for. The scientists do agree on one thing: the colours are for something. That represents a major shift in thinking. For decades, textbooks claimed that autumn colours were just a by-product of dying leaves. 'I had always assumed that autumn leaves were waste baskets' said Dr. David Wilkinson, an evolutionary ecologist at Liverpool John Moores University in England. 'That's what I was told as a student.'

During spring and summer, leaves get their green cast from chlorophyll, the pigment that plays a major role in capturing sunlight. But the leaves also contain other pigments whose colours are masked during the growing season. In autumn, trees break down their chlorophyll and draw some of the components back into their tissues. Conventional wisdom regards autumn colours as the product of the remaining pigments, which are finally unmasked.

Evolutionary biologists and plant physiologists offer two different explanations for why natural selection has made autumn colours so widespread. Dr. William Hamilton, an evolutionary biologist at Oxford University, proposed that bright autumn leaves contain a message: they warn insects to leave them alone. Dr. Hamilton's 'leaf signal' hypothesis grew out of earlier work he had done on the extravagant plumage of birds. He proposed it served as an advertisement from males to females, indicating they had desirable genes. As females evolved a preference for those displays, males evolved more extravagant feathers as they competed for mates. In the case of trees, Dr. Hamilton proposed that the visual message was sent to insects. In the autumn, aphids and other insects choose trees where they will lay their eggs. When the eggs hatch the next spring, the larvae feed on the tree, often with devastating results. A tree can ward off these pests with poisons. Dr. Hamilton speculated that trees with strong defences might be able to protect themselves even further by letting egg-laying insects know what was in store for their eggs. By producing brilliant autumn colours, the trees advertised their lethality. As insects evolved to avoid the brightest leaves, natural selection favoured trees that could become even brighter.

'It was a beautiful idea' said Marco Archetti, a former student of Dr. Hamilton who is now at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland. Dr. Hamilton had Mr. Archetti turn the hypothesis into a mathematical model. The model showed that warning signals could indeed drive the evolution of bright leaves - at least in theory. Another student, Sam Brown, tested the leaf-signal hypothesis against real data about trees and insects. 'It was a first stab to see what was out there,' said Dr. Brown, now an evolutionary biologist at the University of Texas.

The leaf-signal hypothesis has also drawn criticism, most recently from Dr. Wilkinson and Dr. H. Martin Schaefer, an evolutionary biologist at the University of Freiburg in Germany. Dr. Wilkinson and other critics point to a number of details about aphids and trees that do not fit Dr. Hamilton's hypothesis. Dr. William Hoch, a plant physiologist at the University of Wisconsin, argues that bright leaves appear on trees that have no insects to ward off. 'If you are up here in the north of Wisconsin, by the time the leaves change, all the insects that feed on foliage are gone' Dr. Hoch said. In their article, Dr. Schaefer and Dr. Wilkinson argue that a much more plausible explanation for autumn colours can be found in the research of Dr. Hoch and other plant physiologists. Their recent work suggests that autumn colours serve mainly as a sunscreen.

Dr. Hamilton's former students argue that the leaf-signal hypothesis is still worth investigating. Dr. Brown believes that leaves might be able to protect themselves both from sunlight and from insects. Dr. Brown and Dr. Archetti also argue that supporters of the sunscreen hypothesis have yet to explain why some trees have bright colours and some do not. 'This is a basic question in evolution that they seem to ignore' Dr. Archetti said. 'Idon't think it's a huge concern,' Dr. Hoch replied. 'There's natural variation for every characteristic.'

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Dr. Hamilton's students and their critics agree that the debate has been useful, because it has given them a deeper reverence for this time of year. 'People sometimes say that science makes the world less interesting and awesome by just explaining things away' Dr. Wilkinson said. 'But with autumn leaves, the more you know about them, the more amazed you are.'

31 What is stated about the colours of autumn leaves in the first two paragraphs?
A There has previously been no disagreement about what causes them.
B The process that results in them has never been fully understood.
C Different colours from those that were previously the norm have started to appear.
D Debate about the purpose of them has gone on for a long time.

32 The writer says that Dr Hamilton's work has focused on
A the different purposes of different colours.
B the use of colour for opposite purposes.
C the possibility that birds and insects have influenced each other's behaviour.
D the increased survival rates of certain kinds of tree.

33 Dr Hamilton has suggested that there is a connection between
A the colours of autumn leaves and the behaviour of insects.
B the development of brighter leaves and the reduced numbers of certain types of insect.
C the survival of trees and the proximity of insects to them.
D the brightness of leaves and the development of other defence mechanisms in trees.

34 What is said about the work done by former students of Dr Hamilton?
A Neither of them was able to achieve what they set out to do.
B Mr Archetti felt some regret about the outcome of the work he did.
C Both of them initiated the idea of doing the work.
D Dr Brown did not expect to draw any firm conclusions from his work.

35 Critics of Dr Hamilton's theory have expressed the view that
A it is impossible to generalise about the purpose of the colours of autumn leaves.
B his theory is based on a misunderstanding about insect behaviour.
C the colours of autumn leaves have a different protective function.
D his theory can only be applied to certain kinds of insect.

36 In the debate between the two groups of people investigating the subject, it has been suggested that
A something regarded as a key point by one side is in fact not important.
B further research will prove that Dr Hamilton's theory is the correct one.
C both sides may in fact be completely wrong.
D the two sides should collaborate.

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E. You are going to read a magazine article about Khan Academy, an online project. For questions 31-36, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

The man who wants to teach the world

Helena de Bertodano meets Salman Khan.

What Salman Khan, the founder of the non-profit online school Khan Academy has to say to the parent of an eleven year-old in the USA is frankly terrifying: 'If your child is not placed in the fast track for math in sixth grade, his chances of becoming a doctor or an engineer are probably zero. And it's decided when he's eleven years old.'

This is exactly what happened to his cousin Nadia. Usually a straight-A student, she had done poorly in a maths streaming test in sixth grade because she had failed to understand one concept. This one test result, Khan says, might have harmed her academic destiny. Nadia's distraught mother turned to Khan for help. Khan tutored her remotely over the phone and Nadia passed her retake with flying colours. Soon, many more relations and friends wanted Khan's help. Unable to handle the volume of requests, at the suggestion of a friend, he started to record his lessons on video and post them on YouTube. 'At first I was dismissive,' Khan says. 'I thought YouTube was for dogs on skateboards.'

Now Khan has more than 3,000 videos to his name, which are watched by nearly three million unique users a month, via YouTube and his own website. His friendly, avuncular style, coupled with his knack for making difficult concepts seem simple, has helped children - and adults - all over the world move into the fast track. He says his aim is to create 'the world's first free, world-class, virtual school where anyone can learn anything'. Some teachers are wary of him, thinking that he is trying to supplant them, but many more embrace his approach and have started 'flipping' the classroom, encouraging students to watch Khan's videos at home and then tackling maths problems together in class.

You might expect a man with such influence to have state-of-the-art headquarters but Khan's premises are unprepossessing. Arriving at an unmarked red door, sandwiched between a clothes shop and a Chinese restaurant, I decide I have the wrong address - especially after ringing the bell for ten minutes with no response. Eventually, I rouse someone on the telephone and the door is opened. When his assistant shows me in, Khan appears at first to be slightly annoyed at this interruption. Sitting on a leather swivel chair behind a heavy oak desk surrounded by pictures of his wife - a doctor - and their two young children, he continues to work for a few minutes. But once he warms up, it becomes clear that the initial awkwardness is down to shyness, not rudeness. 'I'm not very good when people want to meet me,' he says. 'I want to hide a little bit.'

Khan believes that the rigidity of the school system is outdated and deadens a child's natural curiosity. 'Aged one to four, kids are excited by anything new, they want to figure it out, then all of a sudden, when they turn five, you start seeing fewer curious kids, by nine or ten you see very few with any curiosity, and by eighteen it's very much the exception. Curiosity is just stamped out of them. I'm convinced it's indoctrination, not a genetic thing. Kids are herded together, the bell rings, you're rewarded for passivity, you're rewarded for compliance, that's what keeps you moving through the system.'

Private school education makes little difference, he says. Nor does he believe that student-teacher ratio is an issue. 'The idea that smaller classes will magically solve the problem of students being left behind is a fallacy.' As he points out, if a teacher's main job is lecturing to the students, it doesn't really matter how many students are in the classroom. What matters is the 'student-to-valuable-human-time-with-teacher' ratio. What his videos do, Khan says, is free teachers up for more personal interaction.

He thinks bigger classes with more teachers would provide a more creative learning ground. In his ideal classroom there would be 75-100 students of widely varying ages, with three or four teachers. Some students

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would be working at computers; others would be learning economics through board games; others would be building robots or designing mobile apps; others would be working on art or creative writing. His dream is nothing short of revolutionary.

'In 500 years I hope people look back and say, "Imagine, kids had to learn in classrooms that were like factories and it was unheard of for an eight-year-old to truly, deeply understand quantum physics. Isn't that strange?

31 Why did Khan initially start to record videos?
A It was easier to explain concepts in a video than on the phone.
B It enabled him to advertise his services worldwide.
C It was impossible for him to respond personally to each request for assistance.
D It was a more popular medium for young people to use.

32 One value of the videos is that they can
A be used as an additional tool for teachers in class.
B be shown to students as a reward for hard work.
C act as a substitute for formal learning.
D help students prepare for a topic they will study.

33 When visiting Khan the writer is
A annoyed by Khan's lateness.
B surprised by Khan's choice of location.
C embarrassed by the way Khan addresses him.
D impressed by the style of furnishings in Kahn's home.

34 The writer mentions different children's ages to illustrate his idea that
A it is quite natural for children to grow disillusioned with formal education.
B the older a child is, the less able they are to assimilate new information.
C a child's growing lack of interest in learning is a result of experience at school.
D younger children need more motivation to remain interested in education.

35 In Khan's opinion, the suggestion that a lower student-teacher ratio solves the problem of ineffective learning is
A illogical.
B unproven.
C unworkable.
D counterproductive.

36 When Khan compares classrooms to factories in the final paragraph, he is implying that
A classrooms produced what industry demanded.
B children were part of an inflexible system.
C teaching methodology produced student clones.
D small numbers of teachers dealt with large numbers of students.

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