Part 5

You are going to read part of an autobiography in which a gardener talks about his childhood and his love of plants and the countryside. For questions **31–36**, choose the answer (**A**, **B**, **C** or **D**) which you think fits best according to the text.

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

Green fingers

It never occurred to me when I was little that gardens were anything less than glamorous places. Grandad's garden was on the bank of a river and sloped gently down towards the water. You couldn't reach the river but you could hear the sound of the water and the birds that sang in the trees above. I imagined that all gardens were like this – a place of escape, peace and solitude. Grandad's plot was nothing out of the ordinary when it came to features. He had nothing as grand as a greenhouse, unlike some of his neighbours. Not that they had proper 'bought' greenhouses. Theirs were made from old window frames. Patches of plastic would be tacked in place where a carelessly wielded spade had smashed a pane of glass.

At home, his son, my father, could be quiet and withdrawn. I wouldn't want to make him sound humourless. He wasn't. Silly things would amuse him. He had phrases that he liked to use, 'It's immaterial to me' being one of them. 'I don't mind' would have done just as well but he liked the word 'immaterial'. I realise that, deep down, he was probably disappointed that he hadn't made more of his life. He left school without qualifications and became apprenticed to a plumber. Plumbing was not something he was passionate about. It was just what he did. He was never particularly ambitious, though there was a moment when he and Mum
line 14 thought of emigrating to Canada, but it came to nothing. Where he came into his own was around the house. He had an 'eye for the job'. Be it bookshelves or a cupboard – what he could achieve was astonishing.

My parents moved house only once in their entire married life. But my mother made up for this lack of daring when it came to furniture. You would just get used to the shape of one chair when another appeared, but the most dramatic change of all was the arrival of a piano. I always wanted to like it but it did its best to intimidate me. The only thing I did like about it were the two brass candlesticks that jutted out from the front. 'They're too posh', my mother said and they disappeared one day while I was at school. There was never any mention of my being allowed to play it. Instead lessons were booked for my sister. When I asked my mother in later life why I wasn't given the opportunity, her reply was brief: 'You'd never have practised'.

Of the three options, moors, woods or river – the river was the one that usually got my vote. On a stretch of the river I was allowed to disappear with my imagination into another world. With a fishing net over my shoulder I could set off in sandals that were last year's model, with the fronts cut out to accommodate toes that were now right to the end. I'd walk along the river bank looking for a suitable spot where I could take off the painful sandals and leave them with my picnic while I ventured out, tentatively, peering through the water for any fish that I could scoop up with the net and take home. After the first disastrous attempts to keep them alive in the back yard, they were tipped back into the water.

I wanted to leave school as soon as possible but that seemed an unlikely prospect until one day my father announced, 'They've got a vacancy for an apprentice gardener in the Parks Department. I thought you might be interested.' In one brief moment Dad had gone against his better judgement. He might still have preferred it if I became a carpenter. But I like to feel that somewhere inside him was a feeling that things might just turn out for the best. If I stuck at it. Maybe I'm deceiving myself, but I prefer to believe that in his heart, although he hated gardening himself, he'd watched me doing it for long enough and noticed my unfailing passion for all things that grew and flowered and fruited.

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31 When the writer describes his grandad's garden, he is

A proud that his granddad was such a good gardener.
B embarrassed that the garden was not as good as others nearby.
C indignant that items in the garden were often damaged.
D positive about the time he spent in the garden.

32 What is the writer's attitude to his father in the second paragraph?

A regretful that his father had not achieved more
B irritated that his father used words he didn't understand
C sympathetic to the reasons why his father behaved as he did
D grateful that his father had not taken the family to Canada

33 What does the writer mean by the phrase 'came into his own' in line 14?

A was able to do something by himself
B was able to show how talented he was
C was able to continue his day job
D was able to forget his failures

34 What was the writer's first reaction to the piano?

A surprise when it suddenly appeared
B pleasure at seeing it in the living room
C anger that only his sister would have piano lessons
D pride that his mother had listened to his advice

35 The writer's description of his fishing trips illustrate

A how much free time he was given.
B how beautiful the river was.
C how good a fisherman he was.
D how carefree his childhood was.

36 What is the main idea of the last paragraph?

A His father did not want his son to be a gardener.
B His father was tired of disagreeing with his son.
C His father had been impressed by his son's love of gardening.
D His father had been trying to find a job his son would enjoy.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Part 6

You are going to read an article about the experience of running while listening to music. 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**.

Does music make you run faster?

Runner Adharanand Finn took part in an unusual race in order to test the theory that music can make you run faster.

An expert on the effects of music on exercise, Dr Costas Karageorghis, claims that listening to music while running can boost performance by up to 15%. To put this theory to the test, I took part in a special Rock 'n' Roll half marathon, which had groups of musicians playing at various points along the route.

As I lined up at the start with almost 4,000 other runners, a singer sang an inspiring song for us. It may explain why I got off to a good start. I only came eighth in the end, though, even though I'd just spent six months training hard. [37] However, it turns out that all the training may have affected my response to the music; according to the research, the benefits of listening to music decrease with the level of intensity of the running.

'Elite athletes,' says Karageorghis, 'tend to focus inwardly when they are running.' According to him, most other runners look for stimulus and distraction from what is going on around them. 'Judging by your time,' he says, 'you are one of the former.' It is true. Apart from the song at the start, when I was standing still, I can barely remember the music played along the course. The first act I passed, a folk group, made me smile, and at one point I found myself running in time to the beat of some hard rock. [38] I can't say they helped my performance very much. But what did other runners make of the music?

Adam Bull usually runs marathons with no music and little crowd support. '[39] With the upbeat bands, you find yourself running to the beat, which helps. It also brings out people to cheer you on.' Rosie Bradford was also a convert. 'As we ran past one band and they started playing *These Boots Were Made for Walking*, everybody suddenly went faster.'

The only person I found who was less than happy with the music was Lois Lloyd. 'There wasn't enough of it, and I found it wasn't loud enough, so I ran with an MP3 player.' she said. '[40]' Karageorghis is not surprised when I tell him. 'There are many advantages to using your own player, rather than relying on the music on the course,' he says. 'It gives you a constant stimulus, rather than just an occasional one, and you can tailor the playlist to your taste.'

One runner told me there was a direct correlation between the quality of the music on the course and how much it helped. But quality, of course, is subjective. I remember feeling annoyed as I ran past one band playing *Keep On Running*. [41]

Of course, the music was not only there to help runners break their personal bests (although sadly it was unable to help me beat mine), but to provide a sense of occasion, draw out the crowds and create a carnival atmosphere. [42] As I left, people were beginning to relax after the run, listening to an excellent rock band. It was a fitting way to end the day.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

A I need my music all the time.

B I think they knew why I found the music here so distracting.

C I enjoyed that for a few moments, but both of them came and went in a flash.

D Along with some spring sunshine, it certainly achieved that.

E Someone else, though, may have found it uplifting.

F I was, in fact, taking my running pretty seriously at that time.

G The music here has been great for my performance.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Part 7

You are going to read four reviews of a science documentary series on TV. For questions **43–52**, choose from the reviews (**A–D**). The reviews may be chosen more than once.

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

In which review does it say that

an effort was made to connect a number of unrelated issues?	**43**	
the topics covered are well chosen?	**44**	
viewers are shown how science can occasionally do better than nature?	**45**	
the series deals with something people have hoped to achieve for a while?	**46**	
the series unfortunately didn't spend a lot of time explaining the topics covered?	**47**	
viewers are clearly informed?	**48**	
it's good that viewers are not required to consider all aspects of the subject carefully?	**49**	
the series was worth making despite the topic not appearing very interesting at first?	**50**	
viewers may not always find the series comfortable to watch?	**51**	
the series achieves its aims by astonishing its viewers?	**52**	

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Reviews of TV science documentary series

Paul Hansen looks at the latest science programmes.

A Science for All

Fortunately for me and non-scientists everywhere, the makers of *Science for All* are there to plug the gaps in our knowledge. The series is rather like a knowledgeable parent who doesn't mind being pestered by wide-eyed and curious children: it takes the time to explain all those fascinating mysteries of nature in an entertaining and understandable way. The last series opened my eyes to all manner of interesting facts and demystified some of the problems faced by modern physics. And the new series shows no lack of inspiration for subjects to tackle: everything from the existence of life on other planets to the odd properties of human memory are rightly considered suitable subjects. So, while it's a shame that factual programmes are getting increasingly scarce these days, it's a comfort that *Science for All* shows no signs of dipping in quality or disappearing from public view.

B Out in Space

Although I wasn't expecting much from this series, I'm pleased that the producers of *Out in Space* persisted with their unpromising subject. In the course of the first programme we learn about hurricanes, deserts, and even how the Moon was made; a bewildering mix of phenomena that, we were assured, were all caused by events beyond our planet's atmosphere. That's not to say the programme explored them in any great detail, preferring to skip breathlessly from one to the next. The essential logic of the series seemed to be that if you take any natural phenomenon and ask 'why?' enough times, the answers will eventually be that it's something to do with space. The two presenters attempted to get it all to fit together, by taking part in exciting activities. Sadly these only occasionally succeeded.

C Stars and Planets

The second series of *Stars and Planets* is an attempt to take advantage of the success of the first, which unexpectedly gained a substantial general audience. Like its predecessor, this is big on amazing photography and fabulous graphics, most of which are much less successful at communicating the immensity of the ideas involved than one human being talking to you directly. This time the scope is even wider, astronomically speaking. What we are being introduced to here are ambitious ideas about time and space, and the presenter succeeds rather better than you might expect. It helps that he doesn't go too deep, as once you start thinking about it this is tricky stuff to get your head around. The point of such programmes is less to explain every detail than to arouse a generalised sense of amazement that might lead to further thinking, and *Stars and Planets* is certainly good at that.

D Robot Technology

This ground-breaking science documentary series follows a group of experts as they attempt to build a complete artificial human from robotic body parts. The project sees scientists use the latest technology from the world's most renowned research centres and manufacturers. It is the realisation of a long-held dream to create a human from manufactured parts, using everything from bionic arms and mechanical hearts, eye implants and microchip brains. The series explores to what extent modern technology is capable of replacing body parts – or even improving their abilities. The presenter, very appropriately, has an artificial hand himself. This ambitious series gives us a guided tour of the wonders of modern technology. Though it can be a slightly upsetting journey at times, it engages the audience in a revolution that is changing the face of medicine.

LIVEWORKSHEETS