

Reading 10th form

Task 1. Read and match

**BASE JUMPING**

Twenty-six years ago Carl Boenish took a team of skydivers to Yosemite National Park, USA, and jumped with them from El Captain's summit. The sport developed into BASE jumping, named after the four types of fixed objects people jump from: Building, Antenna, Span (bridge) and Earth (cliff).

Due to the legislation surrounding it, many BASE jumpers keep their hobby a secret, so it's difficult to say how many are involved in the sport. Estimated figures are very low — there are probably fewer than 1500 across the world.

Different countries have different attitudes towards BASE jumping. In the USA, the act of BASE jumping is not illegal, although the owners of high bridges and buildings do not usually permit people to jump from them. There are tight regulations against the sport in American and Australian national parks. One of the few countries that welcomes BASE jumping is Malaysia, home to two of the world's highest buildings.

It is the danger of the sport that lures people to it. Comparably, skydiving is very safe. For some people skydiving begins to feel too safe and they move on to BASE jumping to recapture the sense of excitement.

The main thrill experienced is a sensation called ground rush. BASE jumpers fall from heights much lower than those considered safe by skydivers. Though they do not reach the same speeds, they accelerate more quickly during their fall. At the fastest part of a skydiver's fall the ground is still distant, but BASE jumpers see it approaching them at an incredible speed.

Maybe BASE jumpers are mad, but they also have great skill and focus. They have to know how to manoeuvre and land with total accuracy, as there is no room for mistakes. Anyone considering BASE jumping should already be an experienced skydiver. Attempting a BASE jump without necessary knowledge or experience is suicidal.

No one can deny that BASE jumping is an incredibly dangerous sport. The jumpers are much shorter than those undertaken by skydivers, leaving little time to open the parachute, or sort out problems if they arise. Such problems can often be fatal.

However, some BASE jumping enthusiasts insist that the risks are exaggerated, and can be kept to a minimum if the jumps are carried out correctly. Many claim that strict laws against jumping in national parks force them to jump in unsafe conditions, often from very dangerous low cliff edges with unsuitable equipment.

But even at organized jumps, casualties are expected with ambulances on stand-by for anticipated broken ankles or more serious injuries.

- 1) BASE jumping is...
- 2) BASE jumpers keep their hobby a secret...
- 3) Malaysia is home to...
- 4) BASE jumpers fall from heights...
- 5) BASE jumpers have great skill...
- 6) The risks can be kept to a minimum ...

- a) because it's permitted not everywhere
- b) and approach the ground at the highest speed
- c) if the jumps are carried out correctly
- d) so they land with total accuracy
- e) an acronym for building, antenna, span and earth
- f) two of the world's highest buildings

Task 2. Read the text. Match choices (A-G) to (1-6). There is one extra choice.

**BRITISH PAINTING**

During the 18th and 19th centuries, young members of the British upper classes extended their education with the Grand Tour of continental Europe. There they were introduced to a sophisticated level of artistic achievement (1) \_\_\_\_\_. To ensure such high standards in the visual arts, the Royal Academy opened in London in 1769; until the 1800s virtually every major artist in Britain was elected a member or, at least, submitted work for its annual exhibitions.

The history of British painting is intimately linked with the broader traditions of European painting. Kings and queens commissioned portraits from German, Dutch, and Flemish artists. Holbein, Van Dyck, and other eminent foreign portraitists imparted an aura of perfection even to the most insipid of their sitters. British painters found inspiration and guidance from their journeys abroad, in Italy especially.

Beginning in the early eighteenth century, English artists began to develop their own styles in marine and allegorical painting. In William Hogarth's satirical and moralizing scenes of contemporary life one senses the

evolution of a new and inherently British idiom. Emphatically propounding the Englishness of his art, Hogarth promoted an academy for the arts, the predecessor of the Royal Academy of Arts. The latter was founded by Sir Joshua Reynolds, (2) \_\_\_\_\_. Ironically, perhaps the key figure in the development of English history painting was the American-born Benjamin West, (3) \_\_\_\_\_ after Reynolds' death. Other American painters, such as John Singleton Copley, followed West's example and relocated to London. Copley became one of the most celebrated artists of the day and painter to the king.

The late eighteenth century saw a growing interest in landscape painting. Some artists, such as Richard Wilson, (4) \_\_\_\_\_ while others, such as Joseph Wright of Derby, pursued more individual and personal visions of the natural world. Thomas Gainsborough, although known best for his fashionable portraits, painted highly imaginative landscapes and seascapes that relate to no specific time or place.

The great flowering of English landscape painting came during the first half of the nineteenth century, primarily in the works of two masters, John Constable and J. M. W. Turner. Constable's true-to-life views of the English countryside (5) \_\_\_\_\_ of nature. Turner, on the other hand, was a romantic who sought to project the way in which sun, fire, smoke, wind, and water affected and transformed the physical world. With their fresh vision and powerfully original styles, Constable and Turner profoundly (6) \_\_\_\_\_, but of countless American and European artists as well.

- A painted idealized scenes imbued with the spirit of the classical past,
- B influenced the work not only of many subsequent British painters
- C whose influential Discourses stressed the preeminence of history painting
- D whose art works had great success among aristocracy.
- E that influenced their tastes as adult art patrons
- F who became the second president of the Royal Academy
- G expressed romantic ideals about the essential harmony and purity