Reading Part 4: Reading for Viewpoints

Time: 13 minutes

Read the following article from a website.

My uncle, who was addicted to letter writing, was the role model in our extended family. He lived in a village and often judged people on the basis of how quickly his letters were replied to. Uncle spent an hour every morning writing detailed letters. He kept a small aluminum box next to him. It contained the postal stationery, pens and an old paling dog-eared address book. This book had numerous crosses and arrows to signify changes in addresses.

While my uncle wrote the letter, Aunt would be squatting on the straw mat with knives, vegetables and some old newspapers, preparing for the next meal. After writing the main news, he would read it aloud to Aunt and relied on her remarkable memory to add important details like birth stars, offerings at the local temple or marriage proposals for someone in the family. He was adept at using the card and the inland letter to their fullest potential.

After writing the main story which covered news from all family nooks, he would add information of lesser significance in very small characters and utilize every millimeter of available space. In fact, the letter had to be turned in different directions for all the news to be read. Gone are those days! After my uncle's death, his sons who lived in Mumbai could not maintain his routine. 'Who writes letters nowadays ?' was the defense proffered by my jet-setting cousins to my father when he complained of not getting any news about their family.

Two of my cousins are business executives. They come home to sleep in the wee hours of the morning leaving little scope for headline news, leave alone details. A third cousin is a software professional. He writes only short emails once a month, something that starts like, 'Hi, how're u?' I'm OK and ends there!

Using the drop-down menu (□), choose the best option according to the information given on the website.

1. The narrator's uncle's address book contained many crosses and arrows because of (□)
2. He used to depend on his (□)
3. His letter had to be turned in different directions for all the news to be read because of (□)
4. As a letter writer the uncle was very (□)
5. After the death of the narrator's uncle, his sons could not maintain his routine because (□)

The following is a comment by a visitor to the website page. Complete the comment by choosing the best option to fill in each black.

Quite a fascinating story! The same was the case with my friend, an addicted personality towards letter writing. Letter writing is the art to 6._____ towards your loved ones. In the past, letters were the only 7._____ on which people could rely. No doubt, letter writing can even help in transmitting 8._____ , but more precisely it includes some memories which last as long as you have the 9_____. But the sad news relies in the future, the beauty of letter writing would disappear because of the 10._____. Not just the future, but at present also, the extinction of letter writing is ubiquitous. Hope people understand the feelings linked with the letter writing, the same way the author wanted to describe.

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