

Part 5



Underline or highlight parts of the text where you expect to find answers to each question.

Write the question number in the margin if it helps you.

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. Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

Behind the wheel of her new 2-litre Hyundai Coupé, Emma Boylan made her exit from the congested traffic lanes of Dublin's quays and headed for the town of Navan. Tourist promotions for the town used the tag line 'Only an Hour from Dublin'. Emma was hoping to better that. Leaving Phoenix Park via the Ashtown Gate, she allowed the car to reach 60mph. It was her first day to try out the car outside the city and she was looking forward to putting the silver machine through its paces. Trading in her old Volvo 360 GLT after many years of faithful service, she'd been seduced by the Hyundai's lines and curves, its leather upholstery and chrome dash. Sitting in the car in the showroom, she'd felt comfortable, at ease with its interior. Vinny, who had insisted on inspecting the car with her – believing himself to be something of an expert on the subject – expressed qualms. Was it not a bit too powerful for a woman driver, he offered.

That clinched it. She bought the car.

And now, on its first proper road test, it had come through with flying colours. According to the clock on the dash, the journey had taken fifty-four minutes exactly. Not bad.

It was rare enough for Emma Boylan to visit the Victorian building that housed her father's law practice. Her father did not encourage the habit, nor was it something she particularly enjoyed herself. But today she had decided to call on him unannounced. Even though he was busy talking on the telephone, he waved to her good-naturedly as she was shown into his office.

She sat in an uncomfortable armchair and waited for him to finish the call. Little had changed in her father's place of work over the years: flock wallpaper from skirting board to stuccoed ceiling, wine-coloured carpet on the floor, framed hunting scenes on the walls. Décor she considered oppressive. Muted noise from the traffic in the street filtered through windows that were top-

heavy with elaborate pelmets. An array of photographs stood on top of a drinks cabinet: studies of her father the family man, posing with her and her mother at various events throughout their lives; her father the business man, happily smiling in the company of well-known movers and shakers from the world of finance and politics. Emma suspected that the display was more for the benefit of visitors than for the man sitting behind the desk. It never ceased to amuse her to note how accurately her father's office reflected his personality. She could not envisage working in such an environment, not that she would ever share such thoughts with her father.

Arthur Boylan finished his phone call, leaned forward in his swivel chair and smiled broadly. 'Emma, dear girl, what brings you down from the big smoke?'

'Had a little time on my hands... thought I'd drop by.'

'Emma,' he said, arching his head back, peering at her down the length of his finely sculptured aquiline nose, 'you're talking to your father now, remember? I know you never do anything without a reason. So, why are you here? What do you want?'

'Ah, Dad, you're being rotten.'

Her father got up from his chair, walked to a window facing Trimgate Street and stood there for a moment, his back to her. 'Huh, another coach-load of tourists taking pictures of our church,' he said, gesturing with his index finger at St Mary's Church across the street. 'They've discovered that Pierce Brosnan was an altar boy there when he was growing up here in the town. Strange to think of a Navan man playing James Bond, don't you think?' Emma remained silent. He turned to face her, adjusted the handkerchief sprouting over the breast pocket of his navy pinstripe suit. 'Come on, Emma,' he said, doing a passable impression of a barrister admonishing a witness, 'answer me one question: what are you looking for?'

- 31 What had made Emma finally decide which car to buy?
- B She reacted against Vinny's reservations.
 - C She trusted the opinion of an expert on cars.
 - D She was impressed by its power.
- 32 What do we learn about Emma's visits to her father at work?
- D She would never let him know in advance.
 - C He was often too busy to see her.
 - D They shared similar feelings about them.
- 33 What do we learn about the photographs of Emma's father?
- A They bore a very strong likeness to him.
 - C He probably used them to impress people.
 - D They obstructed the view from his desk.
- 34 How does Emma feel about her father's office?
- A Conditions there would not suit her.
 - B She was disgusted because it was so dirty.
 - C She secretly aspired to working in such a place.
- 35 Emma's father
- A knew there was a purpose to her visit.
 - B knew she was in trouble.
 - C was going to defend her in court.
- 36 From the extract as a whole, we can infer that the relationship between Emma and her father was
- A cold and hostile.
 - B friendly but distant.
 - C warm and loving.

Part 6

You are going to read a newspaper article about creating computer games. Seven paragraphs have been removed from the extract. Choose from the paragraphs A-H the one which fits each gap (37-43). There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use. **Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.**

Playing the Game

It's a cut-throat business but there are massive rewards on offer in the software industry – and age is no barrier to success, explains Rupert Jones.

The frequent claim that Britain has an unrivalled reputation when it comes to producing games is no idle boast; the UK has by far the biggest development community in Europe and is also home to most of the global publishing giants. In fact, the UK leisure software market is now said to be the fastest-growing sector of the UK entertainment media.

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"It's now very much a commercial exercise," says Roger Bennett, Director General of industry trade body, the Entertainment and Leisure Software Publishers Association (ELSPA). "Whereas people can make a film with a camcorder, you can't make a game now unless you have a huge amount of equipment and the skills to use it." And lots of money, too. A top-flight game can cost up to £5m to develop.

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This is borne out by Nick Wheelwright at Codemasters. He says it looks for "outstanding academic people". Those the company takes on will normally have a degree in a relevant discipline, so for an artist that might be fine art or illustration and animation, while for a programmer it could be computer science or maths.

39

When it comes to publishing, distribution and marketing, the skills required tend to be more commercial. "It's an industry that people do want to get into. Whenever we advertise a vacancy we get lots of interest," says Rob Murphy, finance director at south London-based SCI Entertainment.

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Games testers are a crucial component of the industry, and this is an area where a university qualification may not be necessary – five GCSEs and good PC knowledge may be enough. These are the people who play games all day, testing them for playability and making sure there are no bugs.

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Rachel Wood swapped her paintbrush for a computer and the latest graphics and animation software seven years ago. She is now a senior lead artist at Codemasters, overseeing a team of artists working on two new games. "Everyone has input into how the game looks, especially in the early stages. My job is to direct that, initially, and make sure everyone is working in the same direction," says Rachel.

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When Rachel joined Codemasters she had little understanding of how computers worked, but she had had an interest in maths and physics before choosing to take the fine art route. Working in this field does involve "a certain degree of technological understanding" but Rachel stresses that traditional artistic talent and creativity are very important.

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Getting a job as a games tester can be a good route in. Many games-mad teenagers have got in this way and then worked their way up the ladder. Students may be able to get a foot in the door by doing gap year or summer job work experience, perhaps working on the company website. A passion for games isn't obligatory but, obviously, it helps.

- A** Perhaps inevitably, the development side in particular has become much more professional in the way it operates, with a far greater emphasis on academic excellence when it comes to hiring staff. "The people being employed now are highly educated and highly qualified. The biggest studios will only recruit people of high academic excellence," says Mr Bennett.
- B** Now 29, she studied fine art at Plymouth University and later spent time doing oil painting commissions but she was content. "Working as a fine artist is fairly isolated. This offered a chance to learn new technologies and to be working in a team." Once she arrived, she was hooked, though she had to learn some new skills.
- C** Based near Leamington Spa, Codemasters employs more than 400 people, and the average age of the staff is just 23-24. It has, among others, people with physics degrees who measure things like the speed, momentum and crash impact in racing games, computer science graduates who are responsible for testing the games to check for bugs, people with law degrees involved with celebrity contracts and licences, and automotive engineering graduates who design the structure of virtual racing cars.
- D** For wannabe graphics artists, some degree of technological understanding is clearly an advantage. If you're not up on the latest software, however, don't be put off. There's still space for people with traditional artistic talent and creativity. You can pick up the tech side as you go.
- E** "Quite often you will have to play the game for many months. You have to be dedicated and pretty systematic," says Mr Murphy. Codemasters says there may be as many as 30 people testing the same game for the final three months. "A tester might be paid around £18,000 compared with an experienced producer, who can earn £40,000-plus", says Mr Murphy.
- G** But the past few years have brought big changes to the way companies work. The cottage industry days, when a teenage techie could create a game in his bedroom that went on to become a blockbuster, are long gone.
- H** SCI is one of the UK's longest-established games publishers, whose recent hits include 'The Italian Job', based on the Michael Caine heist movie. Mr Murphy adds that it helps to have some experience under your belt. "There are a lot of things people can do to get experience; for example, becoming a tester for a while. We have had students on their gap year in to help on our website." Most people will have degrees but a lot comes down to the individual and their enthusiasm for games.

Part 7

You are going to read some extracts from a magazine article on cosmetic surgery. For questions 44-53, choose from the sections (A-E). The sections may be chosen more than once.

Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

In which section are the following mentioned?

the ultimately futile nature of cosmetic surgery	44
the idea that cosmetic surgery feeds our desire to cheat time	45
the evaporation of disapproval for cosmetic surgery in society	46
the fact that cosmetic surgery eagerly embraces the practice of self-diagnosis	47
cosmetic surgery's ability to increase people's contentment	48
the view that cosmetics surgery's greatest breakthrough came from outside the field	49
the idea that 'bought' beauty is no less valid than natural beauty	50
the notion that cosmetic surgery benefits the few at the cost of the many	51
people's unwillingness to engage in a proper debate about cosmetic surgery	52
people's growing intolerance of the fact that beauty is an unequalising force in society	53

The Democratisation of Beauty

- A** Mention cosmetic surgery and the more judgmental among us immediately rattle off a list of traits its devotees probably share: vanity, narcissism, low self-esteem. We imagine shallow socialites or vain celebrities desperately trying to forestall the ravages of time. But in fact, cosmetic surgery is not an industry built on vanity alone. It is also built on two much more powerful emotions: denial and envy. Cosmetic surgery thrives on our collective denial of aging. It feeds on our envy of those who embody nature's most powerful but fleeting charms – youth, strength, beauty and fertility. Its supporters praise its ability to change lives and its critics denounce it as the expression of our society's worst impulses. It is a useful fathometer for assessing the state of our democracy and people's views about much broader social currents, such as the glorification of youth or our obsessive anxiety about identity.
- B** In recent years, a peculiar species of thought has emerged – call it Vanitus Democratus – that doesn't merely tolerate, but embraces cosmetic surgery as evidence of society's commitment to equality. "Envy is the basis of democracy," as Bertrand Russell observed, but since beauty is a valuable commodity that is unfairly distributed, it can prompt extremes of envy about its undemocratic effects. Americans loathe such unfairness. The solution is to democratise beauty, to make it something that, fuelled by envy and with enough money and effort, anyone can attain. This blunts its force as an instrument of inequality. Writing in *The New Yorker* in 2001, Malcolm Gladwell noted that "we have come to prefer a world where the unattractive get cosmetic surgery to a world ruled, arbitrarily, by those fortunate few who were born beautiful. Those who get cosmetic surgery didn't work for their good looks, but then the people who are born with good looks didn't work for them, either. One of the principal contributions of the late twentieth century was the moral deregulation of social competition: the insistence that advantages derived from artificial intervention are no less legitimate than the advantages of nature."
- C** Cosmetic surgery patients are not ill, nor do they suffer from an identifiable disease. Nevertheless they come to a surgeon with their aetiologies clearly worked out: one person feels her nose is misshapen, another thinks her thighs are too large, still another is unhappy with the bags under his eyes. It is difficult to imagine traditional physicians taking seriously a person who walks into their office, states with absolute certainty a complete analysis, and demands a specific cure. What explains cosmetic surgery's unusual reliance on this habit? The greatest boon to cosmetic surgery was not the development of any particular technique or the creation of a miracle product. Rather, it was an import from psychology: the inferiority complex. The inferiority complex provided a crucial link: it joined individual mental health with physical appearance and thus psychologised cosmetic surgery. People suffering from an inferiority complex because their chins were droopy were actually ill – they required medical intervention to alleviate their psychological suffering. The psychologising of cosmetic surgery allowed doctors to feel certain they were treating their patients' deepest concerns; thus released them from the difficult responsibility of determining whether or not someone really should be having surgery.
- D** Cosmetic surgery – better, cheaper, more widespread – encourages measuring success by outward appearance. What it doesn't offer is a solution to an intransigent fact: no matter how much surgery a person has, there will always be someone younger, more naturally beautiful and outwardly appealing. At its heart, cosmetic surgery is self-defeating since it cannot permanently stop the process of aging. And yet, many of us know formerly love-handled forty-somethings who are objectively much happier after their surgeries. In a free society, why should anyone stand in the way of another person's transformation from frog to prince? Isn't this simply the laudable and democratic pursuit of happiness?
- E** If opponents of cosmetic surgery are too quick to dismiss those who claim great psychological benefits, boosters are far too willing to dismiss those who raise concerns. Cosmetic surgery might make individual people happier, but in the aggregate it makes life worse for everyone. By defining beauty up, the pressure to conform to these elevated standards increases. The risk is not a society of beautiful but homogeneous mannequins. The danger is a growing intolerance for what we would naturally look like without constant nipping, tucking, and peeling.