Test 1 Exam practice Reading • Part 1

You are going to read an extract from the biography of a girl called Sarah, who is visiting Australia. For questions **1 – 8**, 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.**

Tips! Read the instructions and the title of the text.
Read quickly through the whole text. What is it about?



Australian road trip

Dad had been driving our family through the beautiful countryside of Australia for some days, mainly along the coast. Then he suddenly decided we should explore what the scenery was like inland too, so we turned away from the sea and drove for miles through the countryside. Dad was very optimistic about what an adventure it would be, but it wasn't long before the rest of us suspected it was going to be pretty dull, not to mention uncomfortable as the roads were now full of hazardous holes.

The scenery was mostly dry plains, spotted with eucalyptus trees and a few flowering plants somehow managing to survive the climate. It seemed just about the loneliest place I'd ever visited. We drove through several towns – tiny groups of houses with a handful of stores – separated by miles and miles of empty road in between, sometimes punctuated by the odd house on the roadside here and there.

I was curious about the signs that pointed away up endless long driveways to single houses, and started to wonder about the lives of people living there. But immediately the thought of living in such a quiet, remote place made my heart sink, and I thought longingly of my own house thousands of miles away.

If we were hoping to see some wildlife, we weren't disappointed. Large adult kangaroos were a common sight as the sun started to go down, feeding off the rather thin grass on the roadside – probably because on the other side of the fences the cattle had eaten absolutely all the nicer stuff, so nothing else remained for the poor kangaroos. Luckily they stayed away from vehicles, so at least we weren't in danger of crashing into them.

Further along the way, we met some cattle drovers who'd been driving their cattle thousands of miles over a period of months, towards areas where they knew there'd been small amounts of rain. There were just five of them to look after more than a thousand animals, and we learnt that they just drove their cattle towards wherever it rained. They never knew what would happen from one day to the next, which seemed a strange, unattractive sort of life to me.

Then we finally approached a big town, where there was a huge zoo. By this time, we really wanted to get out of our car and do something, so we parked up and went in. The zoo had mainly Australian animals, some of which we'd already come across along the way, so we were quite keen to find out more about them. We saw a crocodile show, where they get crocodiles to jump out of the water by hanging some meat in the air. Far from being the quiet animals they look when they're fast asleep on a riverbank, they were transformed into fierce, snapping creatures that reminded me of ancient, terrifying dinosaurs.

While we were there, two new crocodiles arrived. The two adults had been found injured in the wild, and transported to the zoo in a plane, inside special long wooden boxes designed to keep crocodiles cool and quiet during a journey. Once they were at the zoo, they were released into their pond, and they ran straight into the water to cool off, sinking down until just their eyes were visible.

Then we went off to see some kangaroos. This time, rather than just seeing them from afar, you could touch them if you wanted and feel their soft fur. One actually had a baby in its special pouch, like a little pocket, with just the baby's tail sticking out! The keeper happened to mention that adult kangaroos can kick at their enemies really fiercely, so I decided against getting too near the mother, even though she was with the keeper, and just settled for a photo instead.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

1 Sarah says that when her dad drove off the coast road to explore the countryside

A he quickly decided he had made a mistake.
B the family were relieved to be on better roads.
C he was thrilled with the views they discovered.
D the family soon realised the drive wouldn't be very exciting.

2 How does Sarah describe the towns they passed through?

A There was no sign of life between each one.
B They were located very far apart.
C There were a lot of gardens in each one.
D They had quite a few shops.

3 How was Sarah affected by the remote homes she saw along the way?

A She began to feel quite homesick.
B She was keen to know more about the owners' lifestyles.
C She found the thought of living there scary.
D She wondered why people wanted to live so far from other people.

4 When Sarah first spotted some wild kangaroos, she

A hoped they wouldn't be the only wildlife they saw.
B was afraid they might be dangerous.
C felt concerned about their lack of food.
D was surprised at their size.

5 What did Sarah feel about the cattle drovers' way of life?

A She envied them their lifestyle.
B It was very unpredictable.
C It was physically exhausting.
D She decided she'd like to work with animals too.

6 When Sarah saw the crocodile show at the zoo, she was

A frightened by their behaviour.
B disappointed that they were asleep.
C keen to have a better look at them.
D attracted by their unusual appearance.

7 Sarah says that the new crocodiles at the zoo

A appeared stressed by the journey they'd had.
B had been transported there in an unusual way.
C seemed pleased to be in their new home.
D had been brought in because they were babies.

8 At the zoo, Sarah managed to

A photograph some kangaroos.
B see how kangaroos defend themselves.
C ask the kangaroos' keeper some questions.
D stroke the kangaroos.

Advice

1 What kind of drive were the family expecting, through the countryside?

4 Why does Sarah talk about 'poor' kangaroos?

5 Which adjectives does Sarah use to describe the cattle drovers' life? Why?

LIVEWORKSHEETS