

You are going to read an article written by a young pianist. For questions 1-8 choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

When Your Dream Comes Musical

1 I am known as "Fab", which was a
2 nickname given by my parents. I started playing
3 the piano when I was four years old. My
4 mother thought it would be a good outlet for
5 positive childish energy and I was really into it;
6 it was exciting. It was something different and I
7 had much more time to practice then. The first
8 time I performed in front of an audience was
9 when I was five years old, and I loved it. I went
10 on a summer camp run by my piano teachers at
11 the time and at the end of the week we all got
12 up and played a piece. At that age I was
13 unaware of any of the pressure associated with
14 performing live, so it just felt nice to have
15 people concentrating on my playing, and I
16 liked the applause and attention. Now I
17 perform regularly, often in front of large
18 audiences, and I still really enjoy it.

19 I always knew I wanted to be a pianist and
20 never thought I would do anything else. In that
21 respect I felt different from my friends when I
22 went to school; they all thought they wanted to
23 become teachers or doctors and things like that
24 and I just knew I would be a pianist, but it
25 didn't feel strange. Finding time to play and
26 practice wasn't a problem at school until my
27 last few years when the pressure of exams and
28 things was hard, but generally I would choose
29 to practice instead of doing homework. It
30 always felt like schoolwork got in the way of
31 playing the piano rather than the other way
32 around. Unfortunately, I was never given any
33 special allowances or extended deadlines
34 though. After I finished school, I went on to
35 study a degree in music and now I'm studying
36 a master's degree in accompaniment.

37 A typical day now involves a couple of
38 hours practice in the morning before going into
39 college and attending classes. I spend a lot of
40 time in the library listening to music, trying to
41 learn and become familiar with new pieces of
42 music. One downside to choosing to study and

43 pursue a career in music is that you end up
44 spending hours and hours by yourself.
45 However, I also try to spend time at college
46 meeting other people and networking. The
47 more musicians I know, the more likely I am to
48 be asked to play for others. The more I play, the
49 better known I become and in the music
50 business it's all about recognition and getting
51 your name out there. It's important to get
52 involved in as many performances as possible
53 and take part in competitions so that as many
54 people as possible see you perform and know
55 who you are. It's a very competitive industry.
56 Ultimately, if I am asked to play and get given a
57 job, it means that someone else loses work and
58 sometimes it feels like a constant battle. You
59 can't help being drawn into an artificial world
60 where you are constantly comparing yourself to
61 others and are always worried about what
62 others think of your performances. In the real
63 world outside of college your audience is much
64 wider.

65 I chose to get involved in accompaniment
66 because as much as I love playing the piano I
67 also enjoy working with others. And working as
68 an accompanist is a good way of doing that.
69 There are also more job opportunities as
70 although there is still a lot of competition, other
71 performers will always need good
72 accompanists, so there is more demand. I really
73 enjoy performing with other people because
74 there's an even greater sense of achievement
75 when you are both on form and a piece comes
76 out amazingly.

77 To follow a career in music you have to
78 have a real passion for it; as unfortunately, it's
79 not a very secure path and it's not usually very
80 well paid. Having said that, the real positive
81 side is that I am doing something I love; it's not
82 just a subject to study. I love everything
83 associated with music and performing and it's
84 what I do every day.

Taken from Dyer, K. & Harwood, D. (2013) FCE Practice Tests with Key. ELI S.R.L. Italy.

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LIVEWORKSHEETS

Reading Comprehension Questions

1. How did "Fab" feel about playing the piano when she was very young?

- A She really enjoyed it.
- B She only did it since her mother wanted her to.
- C She didn't like the fact she had to practice a lot.
- D She felt strange and different from her friends.

2. How did she feel the first time she performed in front of an audience?

- A nervous and under pressure
- B strange because everyone was looking at her
- C happy and relaxed
- D She was concentrating so much on playing she didn't notice the audience.

3. Why did "Fab" feel different from her friends when she was at school?

- A Because the teachers gave her less homework.
- B Because her friends didn't know what career they wanted to follow.
- C Because she was the only one who wanted to become a musician.
- D Because she found the pressure of exams less stressful.

4. Why does she say it is important to meet and talk to other musicians at her college?

- A Because the music industry is very sociable and it's important to have lots of friends.
- B Because she feels lonely after spending so much time by herself.
- C Because other musicians in the college are very supportive of each other.
- D Because it increases her possibilities of being asked to perform.

5. When she says in lines 49-51 that 'in the music business it's all about recognition and getting your name out there' what does she mean?

- A It's important that people know who she is when they see her photograph.
- B It's important that lots of people know what she does and know her name.
- C Her name is more important than the way she plays.
- D Her name needs to be easy for people to recognize and remember.

6. Why does the college environment often feel like a constant battle?

- A Because there isn't enough work for everyone.
- B Because she doesn't get on with the other students there.
- C Because there are lots of competitions.
- D Because the teachers are always comparing the students and deciding who is better.

7. Why did "Fab" decide to go into accompaniment?

- A Because she thinks it can be more challenging.
- B Because it's better paid.
- C Because she can achieve more and become more well-known.
- D Because she likes working as part of a team.

8. What does she say is the best thing about studying and pursuing a career in music?

- A Eventually, she might find her real passion.
- B There are lots of job opportunities.
- C She spends all her time doing something she takes pleasure in.
- D She finds it a competitive and well-known subject.

