

Get ready for your exam 2

1/ Reading. Read the text. 4 sentences have been removed. Choose one sentence to each gap (write the letter in each gap). There is one extra sentence.

A It was funny to be surrounded by water, but I feel we didn't have much of it.

B It was strange at first to stay in the same place, but the pleasure of going to school helped a lot.

C So there was a lot of hard work for my parents and my sister and me.

D Our house was always rocking and moving slightly.

E As a result, there wasn't much space, so we had to be very tidy.

The way things were

When I think of my childhood, I think of water. I was born, and spent my early life, on a houseboat, along with my older sister and my parents. I remember the unsteady, but also comforting, feeling of being on the water. **1**

And I remember the rain – lots of it! When you're on a small boat, you feel and notice the weather more. I also remember going to the standpipe to fetch water. We regularly needed to fill up the water tanks on the boat, and that job belonged to me and my sister. We always had to be careful with how much water we used. **2**

We washed in a small tin bath, and washed our hair in the sink. We brushed our teeth with a mug of water. My mum washed all our clothes by hand and hung them out along the top of the boat in fine weather, but all over the inside of the boat on rainy days. A lingering memory of my childhood is the smell of damp clothes.

Our boat was fairly long, but extremely narrow. **3**

My parents' bedroom was at the far end of the boat, next to the little room where my sister and I had bunk beds. At the other end of the boat, there was a tiny bathroom, living space and kitchen area. When my sister and I wanted more space, we played beside the boat at the water's edge. We used to play outside in all weather.

Most of my early life we spent travelling along the canals of southern England. But when I was six, we came to stay in Oxford on a canal near the centre of the city, and my sister and I started formal education. **4** Until then we hadn't really realised that our way of life was unusual, but our new friends were fascinated by our home. As we were by theirs!

USE OF ENGLISH exam task

Complete the text with an appropriate word in each gap.

Early memories

My first memory is of my mother painting my cot. I remember the smell ¹ [] the paint. It probably wasn't very good ² [] me! I also remember falling ³ [] of my pushchair and banging my head, although my mum says it was my brother ⁴ [] did that. He's a year older ⁵ [] me. Perhaps I saw him do it. I have a vague memory of my grandmother visiting us and giving me a bag of sweets, but she died when I was three, so I'm not sure ⁶ [] this is a real memory or just based ⁷ [] what my mum has told me about her. I remember my sister being born when I was four. My brother and I went to a neighbour's house while mum was ⁸ [] hospital. I don't know why dad couldn't look ⁹ [] us, but anyway, we were only there ¹⁰ [] one night.

Complete the text by writing the correct word in each gap.

The best memory I have is the time I spent volunteering for six weeks in Bristol about two years ago. I ¹ [] just finished my first year at university and wanted to improve my English during the holidays before applying ² [] a scholarship abroad. My boyfriend and I stayed on a campsite for volunteers ³ [] was located near the sea. He ⁴ [] on the redecoration of an old people's home, while I ⁵ [] given work in the campsite kitchen. After a while I found ⁶ [] that everyone thought the meals we were serving were a bit boring, so I offered to prepare traditional dishes from my country instead. Finding the ingredients wasn't a problem, as there was an international food shop nearby that had everything I needed. The change of menu was a great success, and ⁷ [] much fun! I enjoyed my work, even though I ⁸ [] never imagined myself as a chef. Everyone at the campsite kept telling me that I ⁹ [] one of the best cooks they'd ever had. I ¹⁰ [] never had such a fun job as that one and often dream about going back.