

## A TRAIN TO CHINA

A. We boarded the train in Moscow as the sun was setting. Our cabin was a vision of past grandeur: heavy mirrors, old light fittings and various pictures of different country scenes. I sat on my bed and drank tea as I watched Moscow slipping away. This was going to be my home for the next four nights. The greatest train journey in the world was living up to my expectations. Rachel, from New Zealand, was travelling all the way to Beijing in China. (1)\_\_\_\_\_.

B. On the first night I was puzzled over how to get any water from the taps, and ended up brushing my teeth in mineral water. There were no delays, no problems with the track or the signals and I fell asleep as the train chugged gently through western Russia, and woke up with the train still through western Russia. Outside, smoke came up from the chimneys of little houses surrounded by trees. (2)\_\_\_\_\_.

C. I sat with Rachel in the restaurant car and discovered that the food was provided by the country you happen to be passing through at the time. (3)\_\_\_\_\_. However, in China they were like a feast with lots of different dishes to choose from.

D. During the first and longest part of the journey, 5191 kms between Moscow and Siberia, we moved officially from Europe into Asia. At each station we got out to stretch our legs and settled into a peaceful train life, broken only by the occasional energetic walk along a platform in a distant town where we smiled at the local people. By the time we reached Irkutsk we had crossed five time zones in four days, (4)\_\_\_\_\_.

E. The train moved onward to Mongolia and stopped in Ulan Baatar, where the platform was crowded with people. (5)\_\_\_\_\_. The final train which took us to China, stopped, considerably, at a station situated within the Great Wall, so we could take photos. That left two days in Beijing before we flew home. The whole trip lasted just over a week but we came back feeling we had been away for months.

### A. Complete the text by putting the sentences (a-e) in the correct place (1-5).

- a. This meant that in Mongolia the meals were quite small and simple
- b. This was proper train travel
- c. They had come to buy from the traders who had piled their boxes onto the train when it left Siberia
- d. We each had a luxury cabin and each day an attendant cleaned and dusted the tiny room and looked after us
- e. which provoked the unusual experience of train-lag.

### B. For questions (6-10) choose the appropriate paragraph (A-E). Choose each paragraph only once.

- 6. Which paragraph mentions a place where there were lots of people?
- 7. Which paragraph mentions different eating habits across countries?
- 8. Which paragraph mentions how the writer felt about the journey?
- 9. Which paragraph mentions what they did when they arrived at a new station?
- 10. Which paragraph mentions what could be seen from the windows of the train?

### C. Choose the most appropriate title for each paragraph.

- |                     |                            |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| 11. Enjoy your meal | 13. Enjoying train life    | 15. Welcome on board |
| 12. Sweet dreams    | 14. A long-lasting journey |                      |

## THE MEDICINE OF THE FUTURE

Scientists predict that the average female life expectancy in the developed world will be more than 150 by the year 2070 (it is currently 75). But it's doubtful whether the dramatic increases in life expectancy occurring in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (thanks to better housing, diet and the eradication of many diseases) can be continued indefinitely.

Perhaps our best chance of living forever lies with stem cells. Stem cells are present in embryos for a limited period in their early development. They have the potential to develop into any tissue to replace damaged organs in the body (skin, blood, muscles, nerves, etc.) and scientists have already begun cloning embryos and using them to grow tissue to replace damaged organs in the body. Theoretically, it could be possible to continue replacing organs indefinitely, creating the prospect of immortality, but only if there are enough stem cells to grow the necessary organs.

Until the 1980s, humanity seemed to be winning the war against the world's major diseases: the use of vaccination and the development of powerful antibiotics had seen killer diseases such as polio eliminated. But since then, world-wide epidemics such as AIDS have raised a whole new set of questions about the world's health. Disturbingly, with the exception of AIDS, little has changed in developing countries since the 19<sup>th</sup> century: for example, malaria is still estimated to kill approximately 1,000, 000 people a year. Poverty is the greatest cause of disease world-wide, so until serious efforts are made to tackle that problem, the future looks desolate.

Even in the developed world, wealth and progress create their own health problems. As we move towards a pressurized lifestyle, there are more diseases associated with stress and depression; an over-rich diet brings an increase in heart disease and cancer; and global warming means that disease carriers such as mosquitoes may migrate further north. But all is not lost. The discovery of the human genome (the set of DNA instructions for human life) should make it easier to predict and treat hereditary diseases, which may be the way forward in the future.

Another recently developed area is plastic surgery, which can alter the shape of your nose, remove wrinkles from your forehead with botox, make your lips fuller with collagen, remove fat from your stomach through liposuction, and give you perfect teeth with dental surgery. Strangely enough, until recently, there was one area that plastic surgeons could do nothing to rejuvenate: the hands. But not for much longer. A new technique pioneered in America promises to get rid of wrinkles by injecting fat from the stomach into the hands.

However, Dr. Lee M. Silver, of Princeton University, predicts that by 2020 it will be possible to go much further than plastic surgery ever will. At a price, he believes, parents will be able to have embryos genetically engineered, so that the child grows up slim, more athletic, or even more intelligent. In time, he believes there will be two species of human being: the 'natural' version, and a genetically engineered elite, as different from ordinary humans as we are from chimpanzees.

**D. Decide whether these sentences are True, False or Not given.**

16. Life expectancy may not continue to increase in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

- a. True                      b. False                      c. Not given

17. Stem cells may hold the key to immortality

- a. True                      b. False                      c. Not given

18. All countries are affected equally by all diseases.

- a. True                      b. False                      c. Not given

19. Advances in hand surgery are very recent

- a. True                      b. False                      c. Not given

20. Dr. Silver believes scientific advances must be used with care.

- a. True                      b. False                      c. Not given

**E. Choose the answer that fits best according to the text.**

**21. The writer of the article**

- a. doesn't agree as to how long we'll be able to live
- b. isn't sure the scientists' predictions are correct
- c. wishes life expectancy can be indefinitely increased
- d. doesn't want people to live longer than 75 years

**22. What's the main source of disease across the world?**

- a. vaccination
- b. antibiotics
- c. AIDS
- d. poverty

**23. In the future there'll be**

- a. more and more people suffering from depression
- b. new diseases spread by mosquitoes
- c. new scientific advances against global warming
- d. treatments for diseases transmitted by parents

**24. What substance is used to rejuvenate hands?**

- a. botox
- b. collagen
- c. wrinkles
- d. fat

**25. Dr. Silver's predictions**

- a. are not related to plastic surgery
- b. suggest future humans will be more like robots
- c. imply we'll be able to live without diseases
- d. say that humans will be similar to animals