

Tip have in mind the time limit!!!!

READING COMPREHENSION

2 Read the rest of the text and choose the correct answers (A, B, C or D).

Mardi Gras: a party to remember

Mardi Gras. Two little words that describe a centuries-old celebration which originated in Medieval Europe. It is the name given to the final day of the Carnival season, the day that traditionally precedes forty days of fasting in some religions. Translated from the French, the words mean 'Fat Tuesday', referring not only to the day on which the celebration is always held, but also to the custom of eating up all the forbidden food before the fast.

Today, it is the city of New Orleans in Louisiana, USA, that holds one of the most famous Mardi Gras celebrations in the world. Mardi Gras was introduced to North America in March 1699 by a French Canadian explorer called Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville. Arriving on the eve of the festival at an area 90 kilometres south of what is now New Orleans, he organised the following day's celebrations on a plot of land he named Pointe du Mardi Gras. The custom soon caught on, and by the time New Orleans had been established by Bienville in 1718, Americans were celebrating their own version of Mardi Gras.

What makes the New Orleans event so special are its dazzling parades. Marching bands escort artistic carnival floats through streets lined with spectators wearing masks. These accessories have been a feature of Mardi Gras since the very beginning, initially because they afforded the wearer a disguise which allowed him or her to mix with people of different classes. Today, masks are one of the festival's most popular traditions, and float-riders are required to wear them by law.

As for the carnival floats, each one belongs to an organisation known as a 'krewe', a kind of social club, whose members not only finance and create their own float, but also ride on it during the parade. The tradition of the 'krewe' began in 1856 when six young men from the nearby town of Mobile formed the 'Mistek Krewe of Comus'. Not only does this group hold the distinction of being the first krewe, but it is also credited with parading the first float. Today, around 70 krewes take part in the celebrations, each with its own history and theme.

The day after Mardi Gras, people of some religions

- A finish all the food they aren't supposed to eat.
- B celebrate the end of a period of abstinence.
- C give up eating certain things for a time.
- D prepare a traditional French dish for dinner.

Material from Solutions Upper intermediate

The second Mardi Gras krewe, the Twelfth Night Revelers was founded in 1870, and initiated another popular tradition, the Mardi Gras 'throws'. These are small presents which are tossed to the crowd by the costumed float-riders. The most sought-after throws are coins specially crafted by the krewes for the occasion, some of which have become collector's items over the years. Other popular throws include cups, long pearl beads and cuddly toys.

Mardi Gras was made official in New Orleans in 1875 when Governor Warmoth signed the Mardi Gras Act making Fat Tuesday a public holiday in Louisiana so that everybody could attend. Today, hundreds of thousands of tourists travel to New Orleans each year to see the festival, which is organised and paid for privately by the krewes. The success of the celebrations in recent years has led to the residents of New Orleans calling their Mardi Gras the 'Greatest Free Show on Earth'.

1 The First Mardi Gras was celebrated in North America when Bienville

- A crossed the Canadian border.
- B founded New Orleans.
- C reached Pointe du Mardi Gras.
- D landed on the coast of Louisiana.

2 Festival-goers started wearing masks at Mardi Gras because

- A they were an obligatory part of the costume.
- B they were made legal for the day.
- C they were handed out by the float-riders.
- D they hid a person's true identity.

3 1856 is the year in which

- A the first krewe was formed in New Orleans.
- B floats began to take part in the parades.
- C a committee was voted to organise the festival.
- D the town of Mobile held its first Mardi Gras.

4 The Twelfth Night Revelers was the first krewe to

- A pay for a float.
- B dress up in colourful outfits.
- C hand out money during a parade.
- D provide gifts for spectators.

5 Before 1875,

- A schools and offices were open during Mardi Gras.
- B tourists were not welcome at the celebrations.
- C krewes didn't have to pay for their own floats.
- D Mardi Gras was financed by the governor.

LISTENING COMPREHENSION

4  4.11 Listen to an interview about how actors prepare for their roles. Match the people (1–3) with the things that they did (A–C).

1 Konstantin Stanislavski

2 Meryl Streep

3 Leonardo DiCaprio

A studied psychiatric patients

B prepared a list of questions

C prepared for a film about the Second World War

5  4.11 Listen again. Are the sentences true or false?

Write T or F.

1 Copying certain emotions is not so difficult for actors.

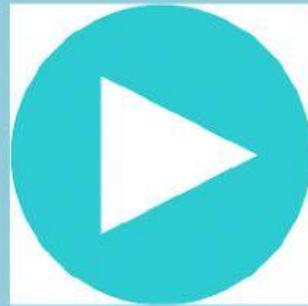
2 The Stanislavski system involves actors asking themselves questions about their own acting ability.

3 Meryl Streep studied a foreign language.

4 Meryl Streep wanted to read poetry in a foreign language.

5 Leonardo DiCaprio met people who had had experiences that he wanted to recreate in a film.

6 Leonardo DiCaprio visited a psychiatric hospital on an island to prepare for a film.



Correct False ones