Part 5:

Sisters

Clara and Silvia Petrosillo were eight and six respectively when they moved into the house next door to ours one cold December morning. I watched from the warmth of our lounge as the sisters helped their parents carry a number of items into their new home from the family car. They worked in unison, each holding on to the same box or object, moving perfectly in step with one another towards the front door without ever exchanging a single word, like a well-rehearsed dance duo. They seemed at ease in each other's company and I imagined they must spend a great deal of time together. I wasn' t wrong.

At first, I was reluctant to approach the sisters, whose expressionless faces and wild, unruly hair did not particularly invite friendly overtures. And anyway, they preferred to stay in the house most of the time, so I would only really see them when Mr Petrosillo bundled them into the car in the morning to take them to school. When the evenings grew lighter, they were persuaded to play outside, but to begin with, they seemed fearful of leaving the safety of their back garden, and shyly avoided eye contact with me as I watched them from my own.

Eventually, though, the sisters showed signs of coming out of their shells. They began to venture out into the park across the road, and I seized on the opportunity to speak to them. They allowed me to join in their games, but they would converse together in earnest whispers, which made me feel excluded, and they laughed very little. To be honest, the only time they looked truly happy was when they were on their roller-skates, sailing hand-in-hand down the road, with Clara, who seemed more confident, shouting at the younger Silvia to bend her knees or straighten her back. As for me, and despite my best efforts, the Petrosillo sisters never really allowed me to get close to them. They preferred to keep themselves to themselves and do everything together, alone.

Until, that is, Harry Reynolds appeared on the scene; Clara's scene. She was seventeen, and he was seven years older, with a car, and a well-paid job in a life assurance company. Silvia appeared untroubled by this. Her face, at least, gave nothing away; but then, it never did. Clearly, though, it was the beginning of a new reality, one which quickly drove the sisters apart, and when Clara went off to study law a year later, the distance between them grew. Silvia, who left school at sixteen, took a job as a gardener with the Council, had her head shaved and acquired a large tattoo on her back. She continued to live with her parents. Meanwhile, Clara graduated and moved to London, where she eventually became a partner in an international law firm. My parents told me that the sisters spent very little time together whenever Clara came to visit.

One day last summer, Clara turned up driving a twoseater convertible. The Petrosillos' house was up for sale and she'd come to clear her old things out. I was back home as well, visiting my parents, and happened to be looking out of the lounge window, from where I could see Silvia taking out the rubbish. When she saw her sister parking, Silvia paused as though she might go out into the street to greet her. But then she turned around and went quietly back into the house.

Then one afternoon, I saw the sisters sitting on the front doorstep in what looked like embarrassed silence, putting on their old roller-skates. They skated slowly around the driveway a few times before finally going out through the front gate. They exchanged an awkward glance, then moved off down the road, gradually gathering speed. At one point, Silvia wobbled, and it looked as if she was going to fall over. But Clara held out her hand, and Silvia, after a brief hesitation, took it. As they skated on, it was, for a moment, as though nothing had changed, and the sisters were who they had once been, before life came between them.

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You are going to read a short story about two sisters. For questions 1–6, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

1. What point does the writer make about the sisters in the first paragraph?
    a. They preferred not to speak to each other.
    b. The closeness of their relationship was apparent.
    c. They enjoyed doing the task they had been given.
    d. This was not the first time they had moved h ouse.
2. In the second paragraph, the writer says that she
    a. was discouraged by Mr Petrosillo from playing with the sisters.
    b. was not allowed to go next door to the sisters' house.
    c. was initially put off by the appearance of the sisters.
    d. was nervous about inviting the sisters into her garden.
3. What is meant by 'the sisters showed signs of coming out of their shells' in lines 20–21?
    a. They looked older and more mature.
    b. They appeared to be growing in confidence.
    c. They made it clear that they wanted to play.
    d. They indicated that they were allowed to leave their house.
4. In the third paragraph the writer says that the Petrosillo sisters
    a. refused to let her go roller-skating with them.
    b. said some unpleasant things about her to each other.
    c. showed little interest in her attempts at friendship.
    d. deliberately tried to make her feel unwelcome.
5. What does *this* refer to in line 36?
    a. the age difference between Harry and Clara
    b. the fact that Harry was successful
    c. the nature of Harry's work
    d. the fact that Clara had a boyfriend
6. When Clara returned to her parents' house last summer, the sisters
    a. appeared uncomfortable in each other's company.
    b. were noticeably less proficient at roller skating.
    c. were no longer on speaking terms with each other.
    d. had trouble throwing away their old possessions.

Part 6: **How to play ... rugby**

Six sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences A–G the one which fits each gap (1–6). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Welcome to a sport which will enchant and excite you, and take you to the heights and the depths of human emotion. Learn the rules and you will be unable to resist it.

Rugby is a game of 40-minute halves with the most **uncomplicated** of objectives – to **get** more **points** than your opponent. **1** ___ You either **touch the ball down over your opponents' line**, known as a try, for five points, or **kick the ball over your opponent's posts;** three points for a dropped goal and a penalty, two points for a conversion (kicking the ball between the posts after a try).

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The complexities in rugby arise as a result of the **obstacles** which are put in every rugby player's path to make it **harder** for him to score points. **2 ___ This can be done in three ways**: by **throwing you to the ground**, by teaming up with other players to **push against you** when you have the ball in your hands or by **pushing against you** when the ball is on the ground.

There is also the **law** that says **the ball can only be passed backwards**. **3 ___ This is clearly rather difficult to do when you have fifteen very large opponents standing in front of you** ready to throw you to the floor if they get anywhere near you.

Each team is made up of eight forwards and seven backs. The job of the forwards is to get the ball for the quicker, lighter backs to score. **Rugby is rather like chess:** chess pieces have special functions, in the same way that rugby players have specific tasks to perform. Within these roles they both employ various moves to get to the other side. **4 ___ Rugby is a game in which all the players work together**, and the better their relationships and understanding of one another, the better their chances of getting one of their team to the try-line.

5 ___ The tools you need to **overcome them** are simple: time and space. When you hear commentators talking of tactics or strategies, they're just talking about the various ways in which you 'create space' or 'make time'. For example, if the backs keep passing along the line they will eventually run into problems, as the last player has no one else to pass to, and no space to run in. He'll get thrown off the pitch by the opposition, and the ball will go to them.

There are **tactics like miss-moves** (missing someone out in the line so that a defending player runs the wrong way and leaves a gap) **and dummies** (pretending to pass so the opposition runs the wrong way).

6 ___There are a few other things which could be mentioned, but basically, rugby is nowhere near as complicated as it looks. It is, after all, just a game.

A The point at which rugby becomes **much more fun than a board game** is in its **team dynamics**.

B However, **this complexity in the rules** of rugby does not make the game any less exciting to play, or indeed, to watch.

C The methods of scoring are **equally simple**.

D Because of ***this*** **rule**, **players have to run forwards** or they'll end up back on their own line.

E ***These strategies*** **are** ***both*** **ways of tricking the opposition** into opening up a gap in the defence for you to run through before you run out of space.

F ***One such*** **difficulty** is that the opposing team can **physically stop you from scoring**.

G Now we know the aim of playing rugby**, and the nature of the obstacles** that stand in the way, we need to look at **how to deal with these obstacles**.

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Part 7: **Walking on Waves**

Read the magazine article about Sarah Whiteley, who talks about her love of surfing and how it began. Then answer the questions (a)–(j).

A

My journey to the sea began when I was tiny. My mum, who used to surf then, would sit me on one of her old boards and push me into the little waves in a few centimetres of water. We both soon realised I had an unstoppable appetite for the waves, something which has never faded. Soon after that we moved on to a house which was almost on the beach. I could literally walk out of the garden into the sea. Living by the sea is something you never take for granted if you surf. I open the curtain in the morning and my heart leaps as I see the long perfect lines of waves rolling into the bay.

B

Being the only girl in the water when I was learning to surf never bothered me because I'd always been trying to keep up with an elder brother who was exceptionally good at sports. So there I was, a tiny little things, itching to better my surfing by checking out other surfers and looking for new moves. I was surfing four times a day in the summer holidays, before and after school right through the winter months as the temperatures dropped and the sea was really wild. I just couldn't get enough of it.

C

Things started to get competitive as I got older and stronger. I was tackling more challenging waves: faster, more powerful and more dangerous, but I was gaining confidence, and building up my experience, and it was really rewarding to see myself improving. And that's when the boys started to notice me, and they weren't too sure how to cope with it. They seemed to think along the lines of 'She's only a girl – she won't manage that wave, so I'll get in there and show her how to do it.' Convincing them I could hold my own in the waves wasn't going to happen overnight.

D

Over time and after a few hair-raising moments, I made some friends and mutual respect blossomed between me and the guys who spent all their time in the waves with me. When I started pulling of some good moves on my surfboard and throwing a bit of spray on the waves, they began giving me a bit of credit, so that if I was going out when the surf was really big, they would shout out instructions to make sure I had the best chance. They knew I wasn't messing about and that I was going got it out there. Things got really interesting when I went in for competitions. In fact, I entered every national surfing competition over ten years. Competition surfing can be extremely frustrating, since you can never guarantee waves at a certain time on a certain day, and there's vast amounts of hanging around.

E

Now I've set up a surf school and I've got a whole new perspective. When you start teaching something. You have to learn for yourself again. Everything you've been doing instinctively without really noticing for the last fifteen years has now got to be passed on, and it gets surprisingly detailed and tricky in parts. But it's been fantastic introducing so many people to the sport, and it's even better when you get to see their big grins when they stand up for the first time and ride a wave into the shore. Surfing has taken me all over the world and now it feels like it's brought me home again.

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The questions below are about Sarah Whiteley. Paragraphs (A–E) are part of her autobiography.

For each question write the correct letter A, B, C, D or E on the line.

Which paragraph ...

a) feeling satisfaction that her determination resulted in better performance? ———-

b) the problem of having to wait for the conditions to be favourable for surfing? ———

c) a change which helped her to pursue her hobby? ———-

d) continuing to surf even when the conditions were unfavourable ———-

e) the pleasure she gets from seeing others succeed? ———-

f) being aware that it would take time for her abilities to be recognised? ———-

g) her enthusiasm for the sea being recognised by someone else? ———-

h) an admission that she doesn't think about what she is doing when surfing? ———-

i) not being concerned that she stood out from others? ———-

j) people are appreciating her serious attitude towards her surfing ———-

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