Reading

What Really Matters

There comes a moment when we pause and question the direction of our lives. For me, that moment came during a walk in the forest. I had spent years chasing deadlines, achievements, and the next goal. But surrounded by silence and trees, something shifted.

In that peaceful space, I realized how fast-paced and noisy my life had become. I wasn't truly listening—to myself or to those around me. The quiet helped me see what I had been ignoring: time with loved ones, my health, and the simple joy of being present.

We often believe that purpose comes from success or recognition. But real purpose can be found in meaningful conversations, shared laughter, and moments of stillness. These are the things that truly matter.

Since that walk, I've tried to live with more intention. I still work hard, but I also make space for what brings me real satisfaction. Life may be short, but it becomes much richer when we focus on what really matters.

☑ After reading:
Ask: *"What line or sentence spoke to you the most? Why?"*

Comprehension

A. True or False

Read the text and decide if the following statements are **True (T)** or **False (F)**. Correct the false ones in your own words.

1. Everyone knows what matters most in life. TRUE/FALSE
2. Nature and silence helped the author gain clarity. TRUE/FALSE
3. The author reflects on missing time with loved ones. TRUE/FALSE
4. The author believes that work and ambition are what truly matter. TRUE/FALSE
5. The text ends with a call to focus on purpose and presence. TRUE/FALSE

Answer the following questions in complete sentences:

1. What experiences helped the author realize what really matters?
2. What contrast does the author make between noise and silence?
3. According to the text, how does one find a sense of purpose?

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- **Vocabulary Matching**

Match each word with its correct meaning:

Words:

1. Fast-paced
2. Clarity
3. Meaningful
4. Satisfaction
5. Purpose

Meanings:

a. Deeply important
b. Contentment or fulfillment
c. Very quick and dynamic
d. Understanding or lucidity
e. A reason for doing something

Answers:

1 → _____

2 → _____

3 → _____

4 → _____

5 → _____

- **Fill in the blanks using the words above:**

(Use each word only once)

People often find more _____ experiences when they focus on relationships rather than possessions. In today's _____ world, it's easy to lose sight of what truly matters. Real _____ doesn't come from status or money, but from knowing we're contributing to something bigger than ourselves. Moments of stillness and silence can help us find _____ and understand what we really need. That's when true _____ becomes possible.

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🔹 **Grammar Focus: Emphasis with Cleft Sentences**

🎯 **What are Cleft Sentences?**

Cleft sentences are **special structures** used to **emphasize** specific parts of a sentence. They are often used in speech and writing to highlight *what's most important.*

☑ **Type 1: It-Clefts**

Used to **emphasize a subject, object or adverbial**.

Structure:
➡️ *It + be + emphasized part + (that/who) + the rest*

Examples:

- ☑ Normal: *I realized the truth during my trip.*
- 🔥 It-cleft: *It was during my trip that I realized the truth.*
- ☑ Normal: *Nature helped me relax.*
- 🔥 It-cleft: *It was nature that helped me relax.*

☑ **Type 2: Wh-Clefts / What-Clefts**

Used to **emphasize actions or reasons**.

Structure:
➡️ *What + clause + be + emphasized result*

Examples:

- ☑ Normal: *Silence gave me clarity.*
- 🔥 What-cleft: *What gave me clarity was silence.*
- ☑ Normal: *I need connection in life.*
- 🔥 What I need in life is connection.

💡 **Why use clefts?**

To sound **more expressive**, **more emotional**, and to focus your listener's attention.

"Which of these sounds stronger: *'I love freedom'* or *'What I love is freedom'*? Why?"
"Do you ever speak this way in Spanish?"

🔹 **Grammar Practice**

✍️ **A. Transform the sentence**

Rewrite these sentences using either **It-clefts** or **Wh-clefts** for emphasis:

☑ *Example*:

Original: *My friend inspired me.*

Cleft: *It was my friend who inspired me.*

1. Nature helped me disconnect. _____

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2. I realized the truth during the trip. _____

3. Time with friends brings me joy. _____

4. Silence gave me peace. _____

5. Having purpose matters. _____

✍️ B. Cleft Sentence Challenge – Fill in the blanks

Complete using your own ideas and the correct cleft structure:

1. What I need after a long day is _____.

2. It was _____ that taught me a life lesson.

3. What motivates me the most is _____?

4. It isn't _____, but _____ that matters.

5. What I've learned from my experiences is _____.

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