

Reading 

A. Read the text quickly without paying attention to the missing sentences. Where would you find this text?

a. encyclopedia b. blog c. magazine d. travel guide

B. Read the text again. Complete the gaps 1-6 with the sentences a-g below. There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.



a. Whistled communities are also found in parts of Greece, Mexico, Turkey and France.
 b. They find it much simpler and, of course, it does not cost anything.
 c. Sign language, which uses hand gestures to communicate, is the most well-known of these.
 d. When yelling, the message can travel about 1,600 ft., but it wouldn't be very clear.
 e. As well as talking, people here whistle to communicate.
 f. We will have to wait and see if efforts by locals to protect their unusual culture can survive the many changes of the modern world.
 g. However, it's pretty much like learning to talk.



Whistled Languages

There are more than 6,500 different languages in the world which all have one thing in common: we use our voices to speak them. What many people are not aware of, however, is that there are some languages that do not require speech at all. **1** Less familiar are some other systems of communication found in small communities across the globe, whose origins still remain somewhat of a mystery.

On the Spanish island of La Gomera, off the coast of Africa, there is an unusual language that has been around since before the 15th century. **2** The local landscape, which is hilly and mountainous and covered in **mist**, may explain why this whistling became so widely used. The sound created by whistling travels much further than the human voice, so it's an effective way to communicate quickly across **valleys** or long distances. Also, locals find that it can sometimes be convenient to be able to communicate in a secret way that outsiders cannot understand.

3 In Turkey there is a village where it's difficult to tell the difference between humans "talking" and birds "tweeting." At least, most foreigners would say so. It's called "Kuskoy," which means "Village of the birds." Here, like in La Gomera, whistling was beneficial for communicating across mountainous regions and long distances, when telephones and other methods were not available. Even today, when phones are more **commonplace**, there are people from older generations who still prefer to whistle.

4

Education in the fine art of whistling begins at an early age with the older generations passing down their skills to the young. It's not easy of course; in Kuskoy, for example, there are 29 **separate** whistled noises, one for each letter of the Turkish alphabet. 5 Practice makes perfect and local children pick it up in the end.

In La Gomera, residents, who want to protect their tradition, have gone a step further and made learning whistling **compulsory** in schools. Unfortunately though, they complain that the everyday use of whistling is becoming rarer as modern technology **takes over** and younger generations move to towns and cities. 6