



Reading 53

You are going to read four extracts which are all concerned in some way with activities. For questions 1–8, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

The Lure of the Kitchen

When I was at university I decided I wanted to be a chef. Among my contemporaries, this was an unusual choice. Cooking was not one of the plum jobs that most of us wanted. It is, on the face of it, an unattractive profession. Chefs lead notoriously harsh lives: the work is long, pressured, menial - and badly paid.

But such considerations didn't put me off. I was unhappy at university. The work was hard; the social scene was insular and self-important. Being a chef seemed the perfect antidote to intellectual and social posturing. It promised a seriousness and integrity lacking in my college life.

But my desire to cook was not simply a reaction to being a student. It also expressed an aesthetic ideal. My first glimpse of this ideal came when I ate a meal at a famous London restaurant. It was a revelation. I still clearly remember my starter. I finished that meal wanting to prostrate myself weeping, at the feet of the chef who had made it. I felt warm and airy for days afterwards.

After this, I developed an intense desire to uncover the secrets of this strange, fabulous art. I transformed my student life into an extended preparation for my assault on the culinary world. My history degree became a hollow pretence, distracting me from my true course. I acquired my real education haphazardly and deficiently by reading cookbooks, roaming markets and delicatessens and preparing extravagant meals.

1 What attracted the writer to the idea of becoming a chef?

- A He wanted to express his creativity.
- B The work involved seemed real and worthwhile.
- C He wanted to stand out from the crowd.
- D His fellow students were unconvinced by the idea.

2 How did the writer pursue his study of cookery?

- A reluctantly
- B aggressively
- C fervently
- D systematically

Extract from a novel

The school's swimming instructor was an ex-drill sergeant, small and muscle-bound, with tattooed arms. When I asked him to teach me how to dive, he told me to sit on the pool's edge, put my hands above my head and roll forwards, pushing myself off with my feet. I practised that manoeuvre until the hour was up. The next visit, he got me standing upright, and diving off the edge. The instructor was a martinet and every time I surfaced he looked at me with distaste: 'Don't look down, look up!' 'Keep your legs straight.' 'Point your toes I said!' The next week, I went up onto the high board. It was a fixed board and its front edge bent slightly downward. It seemed outrageously high as I stood there, trying to work up my courage. Gradually the echoing voices disappeared and I felt as if I were cocooned in silence. I waved my arms vaguely in the way I'd been taught, tried to look up, not down, and launched myself into space. For a brief moment, I was flying. When I hit the water, I crumpled ignominiously, and my legs were all over the place. The instructor looked at me with contempt and shook his head. **But even he could not diminish my euphoria.** That's what they mean by 'free as a bird', I thought.

3 The writer remembers his instructor as someone

- A who resented him.
- B who inhibited him.
- C who despised his technique.
- D whom he wanted to impress.

4 Which phrase explains the writer's feeling of euphoria (But even he could not diminish my euphoria)?

- A 'cocooned in silence'
- B 'I crumpled ignominiously'
- C 'launched myself into space'
- D 'I was flying'

The Traveller

To those of us for whom a comfortable bed, running water and the probability of living at least until tomorrow are of prime importance, the phenomenon of the traveller appears as incomprehensible as it is intriguing. Here are people who have succumbed to the treacherous seduction of the unknown, who actually choose to put their lives at risk by climbing the sheer and icy face of an avalanche-ridden mountain; who sail alone in frail craft through towering seas; who will eat maggots and river insects if nothing more palatable is on offer and who can live, day and night for months on end, in the shadow and the promise of the unknown.

It is easy to dismiss such people as oddities — as indeed they are — to be relegated to the ranks of the truly eccentric: hermits, freefall divers or indeed writers. That they exist cannot be denied, but the strange, uncomfortable world they occupy lies well outside our everyday experience and can be dismissed, we tell ourselves, as an irrelevancy. We can shrug our shoulders and return thankfully to our world of microwave ovens and answerphones, glad that the only risks to our own health are predictable ones such as making a suicidal dash across a city street.

5 According to the writer, what motivates travellers?

- A a desire for a solitary existence
- B a dissatisfaction with modern living
- C a need to discover new things
- D a fascination with outdoor life

6 The writer emphasises the contrast between his world and that of the traveller by

- A likening travellers to freefall divers.
- B illustrating his indifference to travellers.
- C mentioning the dangers of city living.
- D referring to domestic appliances.

Sailing

Jonathan Raban is afraid of the sea, saying it is not his element, which is probably why he spends so much time on it. He does not claim to be a world-class sailor, though he is obviously a competent one. His overriding reason for sailing is that, being a writer, he likes to write about having sailed. Sailing is guaranteed to provide alarms and achievements for his pen to celebrate.

Raban's little boat carries an electronic device that instantly gives mariners their position to within a few metres, anywhere on the earth's surface. Strongly as he approves of this

instrument, there is more than a touch of primitivism in Raban's attitude to other sea-faring aids. He thinks the invention of the compass was a disaster, causing a 'fundamental rift in the relationship between man and sea'. Raban maintains that since it came into use, perhaps a thousand years ago, it has become the main object of the steersman's gaze, with the result that he no longer has to study the waves and feel the sea. And the ocean, once a place with all sorts of things going on in it, is now reduced to a mere space. Since his job is merely to keep steady on a course, the helmsman can be replaced for long stretches by an autopilot. This may be why Raban had time to look so carefully at the waves.

7 What is Jonathan Raban's main motivation for sailing?

- A He needs to conquer his fear of the sea.
- B He wants to gain recognition as a sailor.
- C it offers him experiences he can use afterwards.
- D It provides a contrast to his existence on land.

8 What is the writer doing when he talks about the compass in paragraph 2?

- A illustrating Raban's skills
- B questioning Raban's attitude
- C defending Raban's assumptions
- D supporting Raban's view

Источник задания: CPE Practice Tests 2 (old format)

Reading 53 — Keys

1. B
2. C
3. C
4. D
5. C
6. D
7. C
8. B

Explanations

The Lure of the Kitchen

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