

NAME : ----- DATE: -----

**READING**

Read this letter from Luke to his Russian pen-friend. Then complete the task.

Hi Alexei!

Thanks for your last letter telling me about your family. They sound very normal — you're lucky! Mine are all a bit mad! Take my dad, for example. He works in a bank, but his big hobby is food. As soon as he gets home, he rushes into the kitchen, and starts cooking some wonderful new dish. But they all taste the same to me! Then there's my mum. She's a fitness fanatic, and we don't see much of her in the evenings because she's usually at her sports club. Not at the moment, though, because she broke her leg playing tennis and has to walk with a stick for a few weeks! As for my little sister Josie, she's so boring! She loves school, studying and even homework!

She hates sweets, TV and parties! Can you believe it? But the worst thing is, whenever she goes out, she takes an umbrella with her, even if the sun's shining! She looks so silly! Granny lives with us, too. She says she's decided to enjoy herself now that she's eighty. So she's given up sewing and started doing parachuting instead! She goes every weekend, but she hasn't broken anything yet... Finally, my Auntie Joan,

she's the maddest of all of them! She lives just round the corner, and everything in her house is pink — walls, carpets, curtains, everything! She's even made a pink jacket for her dog! So you see how terrible my life is, Alexei, compared with yours. But what can I do? Write soon.

Best wishes, Luke

For each question, write a short answer (**not more than THREE WORDS**).

1. What is Luke's father interested in? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Where was his mother when she broke her leg? At \_\_\_\_\_
3. Why does his sister look silly when she goes out? She always \_\_\_\_\_

4. How old is his grandmother? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is his aunt's favourite colour? \_\_\_\_\_

DHOFAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS

GRADE : /

(READING)

NAME : \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Read this text, and then for each question, write a short answer (**not more than FOUR WORDS**).

I don't normally have any problems in dealing with money, but once I nearly had a very embarrassing experience. It was when my wife and I were on holiday, in a resort on the Pacific coast of Mexico. It happened to be her birthday, so I said I would take her out for dinner. She agreed and suggested that we also invite a very nice couple — an architect and his wife — who we had met at the hotel.

I knew about a nice seafood restaurant, so I phoned them and reserved a table. After arriving there by taxi, we sat down at a table with a beautiful view of the sea, asked for the menu and ordered. We decided to have soup, some starters, steamed fish, fried prawns and salad. I wasn't at all worried about what it was going to cost, because whenever I buy anything expensive I always pay by credit card.

As we were finishing the main course, we started talking about family. I took out my wallet to show a photo of my daughter, and then I noticed that my credit card was missing! For a moment I panicked, then I remembered — I had put it down for a moment on the bedside table in our hotel room — it must still be there!

What was I supposed to do? We were about to order some fruit and ice-cream, but I had to pretend that everything was OK. I didn't want to ruin my wife's birthday, and I felt embarrassed about mentioning it to the couple, as we didn't really know them well.

I knew I had \$60 in notes in my wallet, but we'd ordered some of the most expensive things on the menu, so it might not be enough.

I don't remember the rest of the meal at all. I couldn't enjoy my ice-cream because I was thinking about the arrival of the bill. But when it came, I was so relieved! I had *just* enough to pay. After that, there was only one dollar left to give to the waiter as a tip — he didn't look very happy, but that didn't matter!

However, there was one final problem. How were we going to get back to the hotel?

I didn't have any cash for the taxi. So I quickly said, "Isn't it a beautiful evening? Why don't we walk back along the beach?" Fortunately, the others accepted my suggestion — so nobody ever knew my guilty secret!

1. Why did the writer and his wife go out for dinner? \_\_\_\_\_

2. How many other people went with them? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What kind of food was the speciality of the restaurant? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Where had the writer left his card? \_\_\_\_\_

5. How much **exactly** did he pay for the food? \_\_\_\_\_

DHOFAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS

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NAME : ----- DATE: -----

For each question, write a short answer (**not more than THREE WORDS**).

Agatha Christie was the most successful writer of the 20th century, selling over one billion books, translated into at least forty-three languages. Most of these books were detective stories, and for this reason she is known as the "Queen of Crime".

She was born in 1890 in Torquay on the south coast of England. Her parents were wealthy, and she was educated at home and never attended school. As a child, she was a very talented musician, who played the piano and had an excellent singing voice, but she did not make a career of music because she was too shy to appear in public. It was her mother who encouraged her to write instead.

However, her career was interrupted in 1914 by the outbreak of the First World War.

She joined the army as a nurse. She also got married to a pilot, although this marriage later ended unhappily.

After the war, she read some Sherlock Holmes stories and then decided to create her own 'great detective', a Belgian called Hercule Poirot, who was extremely intelligent, but had a very high opinion of himself. The first of her many Poirot novels, "The Mysterious Affair at Styles", was published in 1920.

Seven years later, she went on to create her second famous detective, an elderly unmarried woman called Miss Jane Marple. Despite Poirot's huge popularity with her readers, Agatha Christie always used to say that she didn't really like him and greatly preferred Miss Marple. The two never appeared in the same novel.

Agatha Christie wrote her last Poirot and Marple stories in 1944, although they were not actually published until 1976, shortly before her death at the age of 85. As well as her 124 detective stories, Agatha Christie left behind one real-life mystery.

In 1926, after an argument with her husband, she disappeared! After a nationwide police search lasting eleven days, she was eventually found in a hotel in northern England, safe and well but suffering from loss of memory. To this day, nobody knows exactly what happened during these eleven days...

1. Why did she **not** become a professional musician? Because she was \_\_\_\_\_

2. What job did she do during the 1<sup>st</sup> World War? She was \_\_\_\_\_

3. When did she publish her first Miss Marple stories? \_\_\_\_\_ (year)

4. Who was her favourite detective? \_\_\_\_\_

5. When did she stop writing detective stories? \_\_\_\_\_ (year)

NAME : ----- DATE: -----

Read this text, and then for each question, write a short answer (**not more than FIVE WORDS**).

I knew it was going to be a bad day when, on the way to the airport, the taxi driver took a wrong turning and got lost. He had to stop three times to ask the way.

I had booked my flight over the phone, so when we finally arrived at the airport, I hurried to the reservation desk to pay for my ticket. However, the woman at the desk told me that my name wasn't on the passenger list. It took her ten minutes to realize that she had spelt my name wrong! After correcting this mistake, she was finally able to give me my ticket. Then she had the nerve to tell me that I'd better check-in my luggage quickly or I would miss my flight! As it was, I was the last person to get on the plane.

I found my seat and discovered that it was next to a small boy who had a bad cold and kept sneezing all the time! I sat down and wondered if anything else could go wrong. I must admit, I hate flying and always get very nervous, especially during take-off, but the plane rose smoothly into the air and everything seemed to be OK.

Then, suddenly, there was a loud noise and everything started to shake. I looked out of the window and saw smoke coming from the wing! All I could think was: "The engine's on fire! We're going to crash! I'm too young to die!"

However, the captain spoke to us calmly and informed us that there was 'a small problem' with one of the engines and that we needed to return to the airport. I was terrified, but the crew were fantastic. They moved around the cabin, smiling and telling us all not to worry. A few minutes later, the pilot made a perfect landing on the runway. It was over. We were safe!

I took a taxi home, and when I closed the front door, I looked down at my suitcase — but it wasn't my suitcase; it was somebody else's! Somehow, I had picked up the wrong one! That day, I decided never to fly again...

1. What mistake did the taxi driver make? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What mistake did the woman at the reservation desk make? \_\_\_\_\_
3. On the plane, what was wrong with the person sitting next to the writer? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What did the writer see that frightened her? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What mistake did the writer make at the end? \_\_\_\_\_

DHOFAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS

GRADE : /

(READING)

NAME : ----- DATE: -----

Read the text. Then for each question, write a short answer (**ONE or TWO WORDS**).

Arthur Conan Doyle is world-famous as the novelist who created Sherlock Holmes, the great detective. Doyle was born in 1859 in Scotland, although his father and mother were actually Irish. After leaving school, he studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh from 1876 until 1881. It was during his time as a student that he started writing, and his first success was a horror story called "The Mystery of Sarassa Valley", which appeared in a magazine when he was just twenty. After graduating from university, he got a job as a ship's doctor on a voyage to West Africa. After returning home in 1882, he opened a small clinic in Plymouth on the south coast of England. Unfortunately, he had very few patients, and because of this he started writing stories again. This was when he wrote his first Sherlock Holmes story, "A Study in Scarlet", which was published in 1887. When Doyle's friends read the story, they immediately recognized the similarity between Holmes and a brilliant professor who had taught them all at Edinburgh University. They also noticed that Holmes's loyal friend, Dr Watson, was very like Doyle himself. His Sherlock Holmes books were incredibly popular and earned him a lot of money, so that in 1891 he was able to become a full-time writer. However, he actually preferred

writing adventure stories, such as his famous novel, "The Lost World" (1912). In fact, he became so tired of producing detective stories that in 1893 he wrote a story called "The Final Problem". In this book, he arranged for Holmes to 'die' in an accident in the Swiss Alps. However, the reaction from Doyle's fans was so strong that, after only three years, he was forced to bring him back again in "The Return of Sherlock Holmes". Eventually, Doyle produced a total of fifty-six short stories and four novels about Holmes. Despite his great success as a writer, Doyle's later life was often filled with sadness. First, his wife died of tuberculosis, and then two of his sons were killed in the 1st World War. Doyle himself died after a heart attack in 1930 at the age of 71.

1. In which part of the UK did Doyle grow up? \_\_\_\_\_ (country)
2. How old was he when his first story was published? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What kind of books did Doyle **most** enjoy writing? \_\_\_\_\_ stories
4. When did he give up being a doctor? \_\_\_\_\_ (year)
5. What happened to Holmes in "The Final Problem"? \_\_\_\_\_

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GRADE : /

(READING)

NAME : ----- DATE: -----

**READING (Items 1 - 10)**

Read this text, and then for each question, write a short answer (**not more than FIVE WORDS**).

My favourite film of all time is 'King Kong', and I don't mean the fancy new colour version made in 2005, or any of the other versions made in Japan and other places I mean the real, original, black-and-white movie made in 1933. Of course, I'm not old enough to have seen the film when it first came out — in fact, I wasn't even born then! But when I did see it on television as a teenager — that was in 1975 — I was amazed! A few years later, I was also able to see it at the cinema, and that was even better! Now of course, I've got the DVD and can watch it any time I like.

Everyone knows the story of the gigantic gorilla named Kong, and how he is captured from a remote prehistoric island and brought to civilization — and how he is destroyed by that civilization. For some reason, I've always found this story very

moving. I still sometimes feel like crying when Kong dies at the end. Another reason I like the film is that I've always preferred classic movies from the great days of cinema in the 1930's and 40's. Black-and-white films require far more skill from the director and I think they actually look better, too! Modern films may have huge budgets and be able to produce wonderfully life-like special effects. But even if the special effects back in 1933 were crude and simple, who could ever forget that scene near the end when Kong is on top of the tallest building in the world being attacked by fighter planes?

Another film that I really like is 'Amadeus'. I'm not saying it's the best film ever made, but it's the one that's had the biggest impact on me personally. In fact, it changed my life.

For those of you who have never seen it: it was made in 1984 and it's all about the great classical composer, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart who lived in Austria at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Many people believe that he is greatest composer of all time, but the problem with having so much natural talent — his middle name Amadeus actually means "beloved by God" — is that it can make other people very jealous.

In the film, the jealous person is an Italian composer called Antonio Salieri. Salieri is actually a very good composer, but not a *genius* like Mozart! So he loves and really appreciates Mozart's music, but gradually begins to hate the composer himself — so much that in the end he actually murders him by putting poison in his food!

In fact, there is no historical evidence that the *real* Mozart was actually murdered — he almost certainly died of typhoid. But never mind, it makes a very good story, and it's certainly a very interesting psychological study — and the acting is brilliant!

So, how did it change my life? Well, before seeing 'Amadeus' two years after it came out, I had always been deeply prejudiced against classical music, especially opera. I only ever used to listen to my favourite rock bands! But the clips of music in the film were so wonderful that I changed my attitude completely! Now I listen to all kinds of music, including lots of classical music, and I've even learnt to play the piano!

1. The story of King Kong has been filmed \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. only once                      B. twice                      C. several times
2. The original film was made in the \_\_\_\_\_ thirties.  
A. early                      B. mid                      C. late
3. The writer is about \_\_\_\_\_ years old.  
A. eighty                      B. sixty                      C. sixteen
4. She first saw 'King Kong' \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. on DVD                      B. at the cinema                      C. on TV
5. For her, the best thing in the film is the \_\_\_\_\_.

A. story                                      B. acting                                      C. special effects

6. 'Amadeus' is mainly about \_\_\_\_\_.

A. money                                      B. power                                      C. jealousy

7. The first time the writer saw 'Amadeus' was in \_\_\_\_\_.

A. 1984                                      B. 1985                                      C. 1986

8. She especially enjoyed the \_\_\_\_\_ in the film.

A. acting                                      B. photography                                      C. dialogue

9. Because of 'Amadeus', the writer is now interested in \_\_\_\_\_.

A. history                                      B. classical music                                      C. films

10. Most historians believe that Mozart \_\_\_\_\_.

A. died of an illness                                      B. was murdered                                      C. died in an accident

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(READING)

NAME : ----- DATE: -----

**READING (Items 1 – 10)**

Read this text, and then for each question, write a short answer (**not more than FIVE WORDS**).

For me, the best film ever made is definitely 'Once Upon a Time in the West'. It was one of the so-called 'spaghetti westerns' which came out in the late 1960's. They got this nickname mainly because the director, Sergio Leone, was an Italian, but also because all the filming was done, not in North America, but in southern Europe — in Spain, to be exact. The stories, however, are all set in the USA and almost all of the actors are famous Hollywood stars.

'Once Upon a Time in the West' is a typical western, with violence, revenge, and a battle between good and evil. The best actor in the film is undoubtedly Henry Fonda, who plays 'Frank', an extremely nasty gunman who is hired by a businessman to kill the hero (Charles Bronson). In all of his previous films, Henry Fonda had *always* played 'the good guy' — sincere, kind and just. So I still remember the shock I felt when I first saw the opening scene of 'Once Upon a Time in the West'. First, a small child is shot; then, they show the killer's face — and it's

Henry Fonda! His performance in this film is brilliant, and he later always said that it was the most enjoyable role he had ever played!

Another memorable feature of the film is the music, which was composed by Ennio Morricone, another Italian. It is very dramatic, and matches perfectly with the events on the screen. The music is also especially important, as the film contains so little dialogue.

When the film first came out, it was not a huge success. In fact, it lost money! The critics and many of my friends complained that three hours was far too long for a film, and that the whole thing was 'too slow'. However, it is now widely recognized as one of the finest westerns ever made.

Another film that I really like is '*The Sunshine Boys*', starring Walther Matthau and George Burns. The script was written by the American playwright, Neil Simon, and it was originally performed on stage in New York in 1973. The film version came out two years later.

The story is about two old men. They are ex-comedians who worked together on stage for forty years as 'The Sunshine Boys', but then had a huge argument and split up. That was ten years ago, and since then, they have refused to speak to each other! Now, a young producer tries to persuade them to come together again on a '*Comedy Classics*' TV show, where they will perform one of their most famous sketches. First, they refuse; then they agree; then there is another huge argument and a heart attack 'live' on TV — but finally the two old men make peace with each other.

I didn't actually see '*The Sunshine Boys*' when it first came out, but when I did finally see it on TV in 1986, I loved it! The conversations between the two old men, who are so completely different from each other, are brilliantly funny! The jokes are so clever that I had to watch the film three times before I could understand them all! These jokes also taught me something. The two main characters may be old; they may sometimes seem to be 'confused'; but, in fact, their thinking is twice as sharp and twice as fast as all of the younger people around them!

1. '*Once Upon a Time in the West*' was filmed in \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. Spain                                      B. the USA                                      C. Italy

2. It came out in \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. 1962                                      B. 1965                                      C. 1968

3. The director of '*Once Upon a Time in the West*' was born in \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. Italy                                      B. Spain                                      C. the USA

4. It is famous for its \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. dialogue                                      B. photography                                      C. music

5. 'Once Upon a Time in the West' has sometimes been criticized for its \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. length                      B. huge budget                      C. violence

6. Originally, 'The Sunshine Boys' was a \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. documentary                      B. novel                      C. play

7. The film came out in \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. 1973                      B. 1975                      C. 1986

8. It has a \_\_\_\_\_ ending.

- A. surprise                      B. happy                      C. sad

9. In the writer's opinion, the best thing about the film is the \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. dialogue                      B. photography                      C. acting

10. 'The Sunshine Boys' changed the writer's attitude towards \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. comedy                      B. old people                      C. films

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