

SÈRIE 2

PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Sweet as Sugar

Choose the best answer. Only one answer is correct.

[0,5 points for each correct answer] [Wrong answers will be penalized (-0,16)]

1. Sugar cane was...
 - a) grown in Lower Egypt a long time ago.
 - b) not known in Europe until the 16th century.**
 - c) the only sweetener in North America until the 16th century.
 - d) planted for cooking since the beginning of time.

2. A rock painting shows that...
 - a) honey was collected from trees nine thousand years ago.**
 - b) there were fossils of honey bees.
 - c) honey is supposed to be the oldest food ever.
 - d) the oldest written records were kept in ancient Egypt.

3. Bees dance at the entrance of their hives to...
 - a) celebrate the success of their nectar-collecting flight.
 - b) help make a better supply of nectar.**
 - c) encourage their friends on their nectar-collecting missions.
 - d) brighten up the working life of other honey-making bees.

4. Honey and wine are substances that...
 - a) need the evaporation of thick water to offer their best flavour.
 - b) reflect the original taste of the plants they come from.**
 - c) need the nectar collected by bees from the blossoms of trees.
 - d) blend well with the smell of herbs.

5. A most surprising fact is that without honey...
 - a) there would be less green stuff to feed animals and humans.**
 - b) people would decrease their consumption of fast food by one third.
 - c) plants would not stop providing bees with food.
 - d) bees would carry more pollen from one plant to the next.

6. According to the text, the problem is that...
 - a) apiculture is dying as a tradition of feeding livestock.
 - b) the number of people working in apiculture is decreasing.**
 - c) most professional beekeepers work in Spain.
 - d) without apiculture there would be fewer humans in the world.

7. Most of the honey produced in Spain...
 - a) comes from a primitive plant named "milflores."
 - b) is exported to other countries for further manufacture.
 - c) comes from hives looked after by professional beekeepers.**
 - d) is eaten by Spanish consumers.

8. It has not been confirmed that by including honey in your diet...
 - a) you will live a much healthier and longer life.**
 - b) your intake of antioxidants and calories will increase.
 - c) your intake of sugar will be much healthier.
 - d) your health problems will be solved.

Listening Comprehension (Tapescript)

The Best-seller Connection

Presenter.- Good evening, dear fellow listeners and welcome again to our daily programme "The Waves of Enigma". A programme for those who love suspense... in the waves. This evening we are privileged to have in our studio one of the most popular writers of mystery fiction and suspense books. Let us welcome Donna Black, author of the best seller "The Gioconda Connection", the famous title which has been translated into more than twenty languages, and is soon to be turned into a Hollywood film directed by Steve Gameberg. Good evening, .

Donna Black.- Good evening, Ethan. I'm delighted to be here with you.

Presenter.- Thank you, Donna. These days we see people reading your book in the street, on trains and buses, beaches, parks and cafés. Doesn't that make you feel proud of your work?

Donna Black.- Yes, indeed it does, Ethan. Fortunately, though, in spite of the many interviews, the back-cover photographs and all the publicity, I can still move around anonymously and enjoy the feeling of watching people read my book with hardly any risk of being recognised. I confess that it is a very good therapy for improving your self-esteem.

Presenter.- Wouldn't you like to go and tell them: "Hey, I'm Donna Black, the author. How do you like my work?"

D.B.- The truth is that sometimes I am tempted to ask them what they really think of the book, check whether they are really enjoying it. It is so rewarding to see all those people having a good time thanks to something you have created.

Pr.- Most of the critics are in agreement as to the quality of your story. However, there's a small group who insist that the ending is a bit simplistic, something I don't believe for a second. And some will say that the character of Professor Marge Templeton takes too much narrative space given its actual relevance in the story. Perhaps this is so. Could you react to these two accusations?

D.B.- Well, I must admit that sometimes you need to introduce some components that will make the book "catchy", perhaps more "Hollywood-like". The presence of Marge Templeton, an attractive and intelligent woman, can help build up some sort of romance with Bruce Jenkins, the main character. It is clear that some readers will always look for this kind of romance in books. So, in a way, I would say that I made a concession to them.

Pr.- I admit that it will probably have raised your number of readers. One of the things that all the critics praise in your book is the investigation work you have done before writing it. There is a general consensus about its extreme accuracy.

D.B.- To produce a consistent piece of work, I had to keep away from pure speculation or overimaginative theories. The foundations of the book had to be solid enough to support a story which readers could take really seriously. To make it "believable" for them.

Pr.- And this is why you spent such a long time in different universities and libraries searching for sources of sound, reliable information, isn't it?

D.B.- Yes, that's right. I visited university libraries in Italy and France and spent many sunny mornings and grey afternoons in Firenze, Torino and in the Sorbonne in Paris.

Pr.- Did you face any problems at any of these libraries?

D.B.- At Pisa. I wanted to visit the university library there, but, unfortunately, they were doing major maintenance work and I couldn't.

Pr.- Wasn't the information you needed available on the Internet?

D.B.- Unfortunately not. I was interested in the actual manuscripts in the library. They contained engravings that had symbols that were not yet in the library website.

Pr.- So, how did you solve that problem?

D.B.- It was not something crucial to the plot of the novel, so I could carry on with the story without it. I will save it for my next book!

Pr.- That sounds interesting! Does it mean you already have a new book in mind?

D.B.- Not exactly. I know some things I'm going to introduce, but I still haven't worked out the whole story.

Pr.- So, that will give us a good excuse to have you here again when you are ready to provide us with some more interesting clues.

D.B.- I'll be delighted to be back, but don't expect me to tell you the end of the story. That would make my editor mad.

Pr. Well, Donna . We hope your Gioconda Connection keeps going up the lists, and that you find all the inspiration you want for next book. Thanks for being with us.

D.B. - Thank you very much, Ethan.

Pr.- Well, my friends, our next programme...

Clau de Respostes

Choose the most appropriate answer according to the text. Only one answer is correct.
Look at number 0 as an example.

[0.25 each correct answer] [wrong answers will be penalized (-0,08)]

1. According to the interview, Donna Black should feel proud of her work because...
 - a) of the sales the book is having.
 - b) you can see people reading it everywhere.**
 - c) she worked very hard in this book.
 - d) she had a very good time when she wrote it.

2. Usually, when Donna Black sees people on the street reading her book, she...
 - a) signs autographs on the back cover.
 - b) asks them what they think of her book.
 - c) simply enjoys observing them unnoticed.**
 - d) turns around and walks away.

3. The author includes a romantic relationship in the story because...
 - a) she thinks that will help to create a film about the book.
 - b) that builds up a mysterious atmosphere.
 - c) she knows that some readers like to find that kind of relationship in novels.**
 - d) she made a concession to the critics.

4. Which of the following adjectives is used by most critics to describe the work of Donna Black in her book?
 - a) Accurate.**
 - b) Speculative
 - c) Believable
 - d) Overimaginative.

5. What university libraries did the author visit?
 - a) Pisa, the Sorbonne and Florence.
 - b) Florence, Torino and the Sorbonne in Paris.**
 - c) Torino, Pisa and the Sorbonne.
 - d) Florence, Torino and Pisa.

6. There was a university library she couldn't visit because...
 - a) they were doing works of maintenance.**
 - b) it was closed for the summer.
 - c) the information she needed wasn't there.
 - d) the address was not in the internet.

7. The author couldn't get the information she needed from that library in the Internet because...
 - a) the university server was down..
 - b) she hadn't got the password to enter the Website.
 - c) the information wasn't there.**
 - d) the website contained only manuscripts.

8. How could the author complete the story without that information?
 - a) The information wasn't extremely relevant, so she continued the story without it.**
 - b) She changed the plot of the story.
 - c) She wrote a different ending.
 - d) She mentioned the missing information as part of the enigma in the book.

SÈRIE 1

PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Threatened prehistoric paradise reveals its secrets

Choose the best answer. Only one answer is correct.

[0,5 points for each correct answer] [Wrong answers will be penalized (-0,16)]

- 1- The island of Borneo ...
 - a- was the setting for Arthur Conan Doyle's famous novel, *Lost World*.
 - b- is a mythical prehistoric paradise.
 - c- **is the closest place to Conan Doyle's 1912 novel.**
 - d- was the setting for many Sherlock Holmes stories.

- 2- WWF scientists on a mission to Borneo ...
 - a- discovered a number of animal species unknown to science.
 - b- found another south-East Asian island.
 - c- catalogued the 52 species recently known to science.
 - d- **found many new species still unknown to science.**

- 3- Stuart Chapman has argued that ...
 - a- **species are disappearing as they are discovered by scientists.**
 - b- the forests in Borneo are the only ones in the world's final frontiers for science.
 - c- Many undiscovered species have become extinct due to deforestation.
 - d- Deforestation is slowing down these last years.

- 4- According to the text ...
 - a- Charles Darwin elaborated his theory of evolution out of his experience in Borneo.
 - b- Alfred Russell Wallace was the discoverer of natural selection.
 - c- **biologists have been fascinated by Borneo for a long time.**
 - d- Borneo has a forested highland region which covers most of the island.

- 5- The WWF expedition of July 2005 has...
 - a- **added the Paedocypris micromegethes to its list of new species.**
 - b- discovered that the Paedocypris micromegethes is the world's smallest animal.
 - c- argued that the Paedocypris micromegethes's small size means it cannot survive when ponds dry out.
 - d- stated that the Paedocypris micromeghetes grows from 8.8mm long.

- 6- Mr Chapman has stated that Borneo has around 15.000 plant species, adding that...
 - a- it is one of the least botanically diverse regions he's ever seen.
 - b- it has a similar number of plant species to the UK.
 - c- **Malaysia and other Asian countries are going to sign an agreement of protection for the region.**
 - d- the rate of discovery of new species is almost insignificant.

- 7- Last year the team reported the discovery of a cat-like creature, which...
 - a- was captured by the scientists at night.
 - b- has been photographed a number of times though still uncaptured.
 - c- has dark red ears and a long, bushy tail.
 - d- **appears like a cross between two animals.**

- 8- On the whole, the text may be said to argue that Borneo...
 - a- is an exciting tourist resort.
 - b- **has more species of plants than any other region on the planet.**
 - c- has only been explored very recently by scientists.
 - d- is completely deforested nowadays.

Listening Comprehension (Tapescript)

No longer just child's play

Tony Ponds: Good morning, everyone! This is Tony Ponds. Welcome again to our curiosities programme. Today we have the pleasure to introduce you to Charles Hoffman, a man who has succeeded in turning his hobby into a business. He began years ago by collecting old model trains and now he runs an Internet toyshop through which people can buy and sell old and antique toys and games. He is now with us to tell us about this increasingly popular hobby: collecting toys. Good morning, Mr Hoffman!

C. Hoffman: Good morning, and thank you for inviting me to your programme.

[Now listen to the conversation.]

T. Ponds: Mr Hoffman, can you explain why toy collecting has become so popular these days?

C. Hoffman: Well, it has, indeed! In the past decade there have been an increasing number of people who have taken to collecting remnants of the past, which at the same time is like a trip down memory lane; it's a search for their lost childhood if you want. Adults collecting dolls, model cars, toy soldiers, any toy or game they had in their childhood. Moreover, at the same time it may be an investment since this is a lucrative sector.

T. Ponds: Let me see if I get what you mean. People collect toys because they want to earn money and they want to remember how they played in their childhood.

C. Hoffman: Well, yes. There are parents who buy a toy for their children because they used to play with that toy when they were children themselves. Lately I've also noticed an increasing demand for these antique toys, as many people see them as an investment.

T. Ponds. So do you mean that you have two types of customers?

C. Hoffman: Exactly. On the one hand, there are the people who want to find the toys that they had when they were children and on the other hand, there are the more professional collectors who buy pieces in a more systematic manner.

T. Ponds: And how would you describe the average collector?

C. Hoffman: Well, contrary to what some people might think, most toy collectors are not women but men. In addition, 80% of them are between 35 and 40, probably because they now have money and time to spend. Some of them even create sceneries for their toys at home, and go to antique toy fairs to look for one special toy or game they could not afford when they were children.

T. Ponds: Are dolls the most popular toys among collectors?

C. Hoffman: No, not really: they are among women, though.

T. Ponds: Where do all these people buy, sell or swap their toys, on the Net?

C. Hoffman: Sure, the Internet has helped to revolutionise the world of collecting but there are also many fairs and markets where collectors can meet and did you know that on the first Sunday of every month there is an open-air toy market held in Plaça Masadas in Barcelona?

T. Ponds: No, I did not!

C. Hoffman: You can find everything in there from a doll to a comic book. There are many people that prefer the market because of its atmosphere or perhaps because it is like a social event. They meet there every month, they know each other, and the sellers know them as well. Moreover, there are specialised markets or fairs; there is a Play Mobil fair held every September here in Barcelona and a few months ago, there was one in Olivella with Scalextric model cars, I think and, of course, there are the Hobby fairs. My virtual shop was present at the last Hobby Fair with a historical exhibition of toys from over a century. We presented antique toys from 1890 to 1980. It was quite a success!

T. Ponds: That is very interesting, but going back to my previous question, why has the Internet revolutionised the world of toys?

C. Hoffman: You see... it gives collectors more opportunities to make contact with other collectors and make business or exchange ideas about whatever interests them, you know. You have probably heard of e-bay, haven't you?

T. Ponds: Actually, I don't think I have!

C. Hoffman: Then you must visit it! It is the most successful online auction website. It is the best place to shop online. There you can buy or sell anything from books to vintage toys or model trains. It has played an important role in the Internet market boom. Many people have become addicted to buying and selling through this well-known website. However, the Internet also has its problems.

T. Ponds: Why, what are its dangers?

C. Hoffman: It allows unscrupulous sellers to pass on fake pieces. There is a lot of falsification and reproduction of old toys. I've also seen silly ridiculous prices on the Net. Some people sell Scalextric cars from over €1000. Therefore, you should only trust well-known toyshops or collectors.

T. Ponds: And how much money do people spend on antique toys?

C. Hoffman. Well, it depends. In my shop, we sell all kinds of toys but we specialise in pieces that are 25 years old, with prices that range from €25 for a Scalextric model-racing car to €1500 for vintage model motorcycles from the 1920s.

A. Ponds: But collecting toys isn't only about pieces from long ago, is it?

C. Hoffman: No, not at all. There are many people who collect recently made toys that go from Barbie dolls to Lego blocks. However, the most popular ones are Play Mobil pieces or Scalextric cars. There's a shop in Terrassa, which is the only Play Mobil specialist shop in Spain. They sell a wide range of Play Mobil products, from individual figures, which cost around €2.5, to the Imperial Castle, which goes for €155.

T. Ponds: Well, I'm afraid we have run out of time. Thank you very much, Mr Hoffman. I'm sure this conversation will give our listeners ideas for new collections.

C. Hoffman: I'd be happy to know that more people become interested in this exciting hobby. I became so passionate about my hobby that I decided to run a virtual shop and now it has become my way of living!

T. Ponds: Well, congratulations, Mr Hoffman.

C Hoffman: Thank you.

Clau de Respostes

Choose the most appropriate answer according to the text. Only one answer is correct.
Look at number 0 as an example.

[0.25 each correct answer] [wrong answers will be penalized (-0,08)]

1. In the past decade, the number of people that collect toys...
 - has gone up.**
 - has gone down.
 - has stayed the same.
 - is unknown.

2. Only ONE statement is correct according to the text. Which one?
 - People collect toys to play with them.
 - Some people collect toys to earn money.**
 - People only collect toys that they had in their childhood.
 - People collect toys they lost in their childhood.

3. According to the text, who collect the most toys?
 - There's no difference.
 - Children do.
 - Men do.**
 - Women do.

4. According to Hoffman, most collectors are between 35 and 40 because at that age...
 - they cannot play with toys so they collect them.
 - they have children who start playing with Scalextric or Playmobil.
 - they have some free time and can spend money on their own hobbies.**
 - people are more systematic and 80% of the people start a collection.

5. Which is the most popular toy among women?
 - There's no difference to men
 - Playmobil.
 - Scalextric cars.
 - Dolls.**

6. Why do some people prefer open-air markets to the Internet? Because they...
 - are held in Barcelona.
 - are meeting places.**
 - are much cheaper.
 - are all specialised markets.

7. What are the dangers of buying toys on the Internet?
 - Some toys are fake pieces or are too expensive.**
 - There are silly people selling their toys.
 - Fake Scalextric cars are always expensive on the Net.
 - There is only one website you can trust: e-bay.

8. What is special about the shop in Terrassa Mr. Hoffman talks about?
 - It sells Imperial Castles at €2.5.
 - It only sells Scalextric and Playmobil products.
 - It sells Barbie dolls, Lego blocks, Scalextric and Playmobil products.
 - It is the only shop that specialises in Playmobil products.**