

Reading multiple-choice questions

1 You are going to read an extract from a novel about a girl called Rowan who dreams of travelling the world. Read the extract quickly and answer the following questions.

- 1 Where does Rowan grow up?
- 2 Where does she go to work?
- 3 Where does she dream of travelling to?

Rowan was twenty-four years old. She'd been dreaming of travelling the world since she was twelve.

It was Mr Kinear, her geography teacher back home in Scotland, who had first set her dreaming. He cycled to school summer and winter wearing a poncho. He was not a man who kept to the point. Trying to fill young minds with facts – a country's imports, exports, natural resources, populations – did not make him happy. He would gaze across the rows of faces before him, aware of how tired they might be of the process of gathering new knowledge. He would see who was sucking a sweet and who was gazing out of the window and who was passing notes to whom, and he could not bear to think that he was the cause of this boredom.

So instead of teaching, he would tell his pupils about his journeys. He told them about his days of backpacking through Peru and Australia, and about his journey from this little Scottish town where he'd been born down to London, across Europe to India. Not knowing what to think, his pupils continued to suck, gaze and scribble.

But Rowan was different. She sat spellbound in her stiff new school uniform and listened to every word. She wanted to do that, go to places where she was not known, travel the world with just a rucksack and a spare pair of shoes. She wanted to get away from this town, away from her parents and the routine life they led, from strict mealtimes, with breakfast at seven thirty, lunch at a quarter to one, tea at five thirty, and from the family's annual fortnight's trip to the seaside. She wanted to spend years on the move until she found the place where she was meant to be.

In those days, she would get excited just being somewhere where the buses were a different colour. She was convinced there was a place somewhere out there where she would be completely happy. She would find it. One day she would walk into some strange little town, sit down at a table in a small café, look round and say, 'This is it. This is where I am meant to be.'

As soon as she'd finished school, she left the small town where she lived with her parents in Scotland, and got a job as a secretary in London. She did not want to work at moving up the career ladder, but she kept her dreams. She imagined a whole wide gorgeous world waiting for her to tramp across it. Determined to get

there, she did not notice the things that were going on around her and so denied herself all sorts of simple pleasures – new clothes, music, nights out – in order to save up for her great adventure.

The routes she planned to take, following in the footsteps of other travellers, greater, she thought, than she would ever be, were carefully marked on the maps that covered the walls of her room. One day, she told herself, she would visit the places on her maps and have her own great adventure. She would stand on lonesome railway platforms waiting for trains to come along with their clattering crowds of people, and travel to wherever the tracks took her. She would go to Africa and watch wide grey lakes turn pink with flamingos. She would visit Patagonia and Peru. She would walk the Great Wall of China. She would trek the Australian outback, guided only by ancient dreaming songs, under southern skies. She would sleep under canvas, whilst beyond her tent a jungle lived and moved. She would wander in the deserts of Sudan. She would do all that and more. She would. She would.

From IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU by Isla Dewar

2 Now read the text again. For questions 1–6, choose the answer (A, B, C or D), which you think fits best according to the text.

- 1 The writer suggests that Mr Kinear was
 - A unobservant of what was going on in his classroom.
 - B successful in involving the students in his subject.
 - C sympathetic to his students' feelings.
 - D uninterested in his students' problems.
- 2 What does 'spellbound' mean in line 22?
 - A confused
 - B shocked
 - C unbelieving
 - D fascinated
- 3 Rowan listened to Mr Kinear in his lessons because
 - A he gave her ideas for things she would like to achieve.
 - B he had travelled to places she had always wanted to see.
 - C he was an example of someone who had escaped.
 - D he understood her frustration with her own situation.
- 4 During her schooldays, when Rowan thought about travelling, she wanted to
 - A see sights that were unusual.
 - B experience different cultures.
 - C find a place that felt right for her.
 - D learn how to adapt to new situations.
- 5 The writer says that when Rowan went to London,
 - A she was frustrated because her pay was too low for her to enjoy life.
 - B she was disappointed that her job offered so few opportunities.
 - C she was confused by the size and activity of the city.
 - D she was unaware of the possibilities the city offered.
- 6 'Greater' in line 50 refers to
 - A Rowan's maps.
 - B the routes Rowan planned.
 - C other travellers.
 - D the journeys of other people.

1 You are going to read a text about a group of women who went on an expedition in the Arctic circle. Read the text on the right once quickly and say which of the items in the list is not mentioned.

- 1 choosing the group members
- 2 preparations for the trip
- 3 weather conditions
- 4 preparing food
- 5 protective clothing
- 6 feelings and relationships

2 Read the text again. For questions 1–7, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

- 1 What was so extraordinary about the expedition?
 - A There was no one to lead it.
 - B The women did not have any men with them.
 - C It was a new experience for most of the women.
 - D The women had not met one another before.

- 2 Why were the women who took part in the expedition chosen?
 - A They were the only ones who answered the advertisement.
 - B They had done a weekend training course.
 - C They were still in the group after others had been eliminated.
 - D They came from very diverse backgrounds.

- 3 What did the women who answered the advertisement have in common?
 - A They were about the same age.
 - B They had all suffered pain and discomfort.
 - C They all had plenty of money.
 - D They all wanted to achieve a goal.

- 4 What does 'these' refer to in line 28?
 - A all the applicants
 - B the training expeditions
 - C the women who went on the trip
 - D the unsuitable applicants

- 5 What did each woman have to do before the start of the expedition?
 - A visit Canada
 - B get fit
 - C learn to ski
 - D meet the other women

- 6 On the expedition, the women had to be careful to avoid
 - A falling over on the ice.
 - B being left behind.
 - C damaging the sledges.
 - D getting too cold at night.

- 7 It was difficult for the women to cover 15 kilometres a day because
 - A they got too tired.
 - B the ice was moving.
 - C they kept getting lost.
 - D the temperatures were too low.

- 8 What is the main message of the text?
 - A Motivation and teamwork achieve goals.
 - B Women can do anything they want.
 - C It is sometimes good to experience difficult conditions.
 - D Arctic conditions are very harsh.

POLAR PURPOSE

In 1997, a group of twenty British women made history. Working in five teams with four women in each team, they walked to the North Pole. Apart from one experienced female guide, the other women were all ordinary people who had never done anything like this in their lives before. They managed to survive in an environment which had defeated several very experienced men during the same few spring months of that year. Who were these women and how did they succeed where others failed?

In the summer of 1995, an advertisement was put in several British newspapers: 'Adventurers are being sought for the formation of an all-woman team to walk to the North Pole. Applications are invited from women of any age, background and occupation who are willing to put up with real pain and discomfort to achieve an important goal.'

Nearly one hundred women took part in the first selection weekend and then, after several training expeditions designed to weed out unsuitable applicants, twenty women were chosen. The youngest of these was twenty-one and the oldest fifty-one. In the group there was a mother of triplets, a teacher, a flight attendant, a policewoman and even a film producer.

They were a very mixed bunch but they all really wanted to take part in the venture and make it a success. Each of the women agreed to raise the £2500 needed for expenses and the airfare to Canada, where the expedition began. They also committed themselves to following an intensive physical training programme before leaving the UK so that they were fit enough to take part in the expedition without endangering their own or others' lives.

The women set off as soon as they were ready. Once on the ice, each woman had to ski along while dragging a sledge weighing over 50 kilos. This would not have been too bad on a smooth surface, but for long stretches, the Arctic ice is pushed up into huge mounds two or three metres high and the sledges had to be hauled up one side and carefully let down the other so that they didn't smash. The temperature was always below freezing point and sometimes strong winds made walking while pulling so much weight almost impossible. It was also very difficult to put up their tents when they stopped each night.

In such conditions the women were making good progress if they covered fourteen or fifteen kilometres a day. But there was another problem. Part of the journey was across a frozen sea with moving water underneath the ice and at some points the team would drift back more than five kilometres during the night. That meant that after walking in these very harsh conditions for ten hours on one day, they had to spend part of the next day covering the same ground again. Furthermore, each day it would take three hours from waking up to setting off and another three hours every evening to set up the camp and prepare the evening meal.

So, how did they manage to succeed? They realised that they were part of a team. If any one of them didn't pull her sledge or get her job done, she would be jeopardising the success of the whole expedition. Any form of selfishness could result in the efforts of everyone else being completely wasted, so personal feelings had to be put to one side. At the end of their journey, the women agreed that it was mental effort far more than physical fitness that got them to the North Pole.