

TEST 10

READING

PART 1

You are going to read a magazine article about some works of art. Choose from the list (A-H) the sentence which best summarises each part (1-6) of the article. There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use. There is an example at the beginning (0).

- A Some of the paintings are excellent but worthless copies.
- B After the fall of the Soviet Union, many hidden works of art came to light.
- C The impressionist paintings, some of which are new to the public, are the most impressive.
- D Some of the paintings still have not found their pre-war owners.
- E Deciding who the current owners are is a complicated process.
- F Many of the paintings have proved to be extremely valuable.
- G A lot of money will be needed to restore the paintings.
- H Most of the paintings were stolen from private houses towards the end of the Second World War.

PART 2

You are going to read an extract from a travel journal. For questions 7-13, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

"Open the door!" It was three o'clock in the morning. In the darkness of the train's sleeping car I moved towards the door and slid it open. A huge guard armed with a gun stood before me demanding my passport. He wanted to make sure I had my visa and the necessary papers to enter the country.

Fortunately I did. As I opened my suitcase, I couldn't help thinking that this was not the best way to start a holiday. We were heading for a two-week trip to the coast. I had thought that leaving the city for a warmer, more picturesque area would make an affordable break for my daughters. My husband had been unable to get time off.

On arrival, we could find no taxis to take us from the train station to the small fishing town we were going to, and we had no bus tickets. Finally we managed to find a local man who offered us a lift for a large sum of money. We drove up a steep hill and there on the other side was the deep blue bay positioned between two cliffs. I longed to swim in the crystal water. Our dream holiday had begun!

Two hours later I was sitting, in tears, on an uncomfortable mattress in a small farm house. I had found that the only hotel in town was vastly overbooked and other types of accommodation were gloomy blocks of flats with hard beds, peeling paint and a limited water supply. Not the sort of environment for young children. Like other disillusioned tourists, I was beginning to realize that the town was more of a slum than the beautiful resort I had imagined.

So we had ended up in nothing more than a shed in a vine-covered yard. The twenty or so guests were constantly watched by a fearsome landlady. She had seven sheds crowded into her backyard. To make matters worse, we were forbidden to heat water on the gas stove and our water supply was strictly limited.

Instead of going to the beach, I dragged my five-year-old Sasha and my two-year-old Anna to the main town to look for food. I found plenty of alcohol and cigarettes, but no bread, milk, butter, meat or salt, not to mention delicacies like eggs, cheese and sausage. My motherly instinct told me to leave the place immediately. "Nothing to the city for the next five weeks," I was told by a hard-looking woman at the train station.

Fighting down a feeling of panic, I marched the children off to the sea. We sat in the sub-tropical heat, barely able to move among so many people. I noticed that none of the children had buckets, spades, beach balls or swimming costumes. Such items were luxuries.

About a week into the holiday, the children stopped asking for ice-cream and were adapting to their diet of potatoes. Soon, however, Anna fell ill with a high fever. The hospital had no medicine. We were finally rescued by my husband who paid large bribes to get us plane tickets out of the area on a packed aeroplane. He made me promise never to return there, and I readily agreed!

Hermitage Reveals Lost Masters

Many valuable painting were discovered after the fall of the Soviet Union.

0 B

Some of the great paintings which disappeared during World War II were recently found to have been kept in secret in the Soviet Union. They had been concealed in rooms in the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg by order of the Soviet government. Their existence has only come to light with the opening up of the former Soviet Union.

1

There are literally hundreds of paintings, 74 of which are masterpieces. Among the artists represented are Degas, Van Gogh, Cezanne and Picasso. The paintings were taken from German homes at the end of the Second World War by the Red Army and secretly transported back to Russia, where they were deposited at the Hermitage. Other treasures were stolen from German museums at the same time and, although these were also taken to the Soviet Union, they were given back 13 years after the end of the War. The existence of the works still in Russia was only revealed 2 years ago.

2

The value of these works of art is enormous. Although no official amount has been given, experts believe they are worth about £200 million. However, valuing paintings such as these is extremely difficult because the market changes so much from year to year.

3

It is the impressionist works which are of greatest value, the most outstanding being Degas' "Place de la Concorde". This work is particularly special because of the balance between the scenery in the background and the figures in the foreground. There are also excellent examples of the work of Gauguin, one of which had never been seen in public before.

cause of the balance between the scenery in the background and the figures in the foreground. There are also excellent examples of the work of Gauguin, one of which had never been seen in public before.

4

However, not all the paintings are the masterpieces the Russians first thought they were. Several of the works have been discovered to be fakes. One Toulouse-Lautrec was almost put into an exhibition at the Hermitage before an expert worked out that it was an excellent, but valueless, copy.

5

Descendants of the original owners are of course trying to get the paintings returned to them. Establishing the exact rights of the owners is difficult. In theory the paintings were stolen, but property taken during a war can be subject to laws which are different to those concerning loss of property in normal circumstances. Under pressure from Germany, the Russian parliament is being urged to make a decision, a process which could take years.

6

So just who do the paintings belong to? Well over 75% of the impressionist paintings came from a collection which belonged to a German industrialist, Otto Krebs. He died childless, but in his will left everything to a medical foundation who are now trying to get the works returned. Some paintings remain unclaimed, but no doubt the German government will try and get them back for their own museums.

7 Why did the guard want to see the writer's passport?

- A He wanted to check her nationality.
- B He was making sure everything was in order.
- C He wanted to make sure she had one.
- D He was being aggressive.

8 The writer decided to take a holiday in that village because she

- A thought it would be a pleasant family holiday.
- B enjoyed travelling by train.
- C had heard you didn't need a visa.
- D thought it would be cheap.

9 From the car window the bay looked

- A inviting.
- B hostile.
- C rocky.
- D longing.

10 In the writer's opinion, the accommodation she looked at was

- A overbooked.
- B ideal.
- C unimaginative.
- D unacceptable.

11 What was particularly upsetting about the shed?

- A The smell.
- B The number of people.
- C The restrictions.
- D The noise.

12 When the writer inquired about leaving she was thinking

- A of her children.
- B of herself.
- C of her husband.
- D of her landlady.

13 When she couldn't leave the village the writer decided to

- A force her children to go swimming.
- B try to find a shop that sold beach balls.
- C complain to the woman at the train station.
- D make the best of the situation.