

PART 1

You are going to read a newspaper article about lightning. Choose the most suitable heading from the list (A-I) for each part (1-7) of the article. There is one extra heading which you do not need to use. There is an example at the beginning (0).

- A Lightning strikes twice.
- B Modern life needs more protection.
- C Striking every second.
- D Less harm than you'd think.
- E Trying to understand lightning.
- F Predicting danger.
- G You should know what to do.
- H Calm Britain - stormy equator.
- I Different lifestyles, fewer deaths.

PART 2

You are going to read a story about memory. For questions 8-15, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

When an old friend invited me to his house for a dinner party, I did not think for a moment that this would lead the way to doubling my salary in less than two years. But that is exactly what happened.

By the end of the evening the conversation was beginning to dry up, and somebody suggested we all did a "party-piece". Some people sang, some played the piano and others told stories.

Then it was the turn of Peter Brown, a salesman from Cardiff. He said he was going to perform a memory trick. He told us to put a blindfold over his eyes, and then asked the guests to call out 25 numbers, all of three figures each, such as 161, 249, and so on. He asked me to make a note of all the numbers as they were called out. Peter then astonished everyone at the party by repeating the entire list of numbers, first in the correct order, then backwards. He then asked people to request numbers by their position on my list, such as number 4 or number 19. The guests did this with all the numbers, and Peter told them the correct numbers over and over, without making a single mistake. The numbers were then mixed up and called out again. Peter performed the same trick and truly amazed all of us. You expect to see this type of trick performed on stage or on television but not by an ordinary man, in a situation where cheating is impossible.

Later on I asked Peter how he had done the trick. He said that by remembering a few simple rules anyone could do it. Most people, he continued, leave the development of their memories to chance, but by following these rules we could all develop good memories, and he told me how to do it.

Over the next few days I learned to do exactly what Peter had done. At first it was just for fun but soon I was receiving invitations to lots of parties, and people were amazed by the tricks I could perform with my memory. They often asked me how they could become as popular and successful and I told them what Peter Brown had told me.

However, the greatest thing about improving my memory came out at the office. My thinking had become much clearer and quicker. I was learning to do things that until recently I had only been able to admire in other people. In time I also began to notice a big improvement in my writing and conversational skills. Before I learned how to improve my memory, I used to speak and write in a very slow, confused way. I could never think of anything to say. But now, I never have to search for the right word or expression, and I find myself impressing people with my bright conversation.

Before long, my newly learned skills and my ability to remember things attracted the attention of my boss and I was given more responsibility and a big improvement in my salary. I found that my ability to remember things helped me a lot in dealing with other people, especially in business meetings. A person who can support their statements with facts and figures is always at the centre of a meeting. Nowadays, I never forget anything. I can remember anything I want to, as if it were written on a piece of paper in front of me.

Lightning

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As you read through this, some 2,000 thunderstorms are tearing apart the skies across the world. And every second a hundred lightning bolts are striking the ground with their terrifying roar - fingers of electricity up to 32 kilometres long that burn all they touch with temperatures that reach 30,000°C. It's hardly surprising that lightning was feared by earlier cultures as a sign of anger from their gods.

Predicting when and where it is likely to strike is one of the ways we have made lightning less of a menace. Forecasting lightning is taken very seriously in America, for example, where scientists keep a constant eye on weather patterns that could lead to violent storms. New methods enable scientists to warn people in threatened areas before a storm reaches them.

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Lightning still has the power to thrill and fascinate. It is now also an active area of research for scientists, who are still struggling to uncover its secrets and are looking for ways to protect against the potentially disastrous effects of lightning strikes.

A good indication of the fact that a lightning strike is directly overhead is when your hair stands on end. In potentially fatal circumstances, crouch down low with your hands on your knees. Never lie on the ground. If stuck out in a storm never shelter under an isolated tree, which can act as a lightning conductor, and stay away from anything made of metal.

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Britain only has about 10 days of thunderstorms a year. Yorkshire and the south Midlands are the worst affected. By contrast, countries close to the equator suffer most from thunderstorms. Countries like Nigeria, for example, tend to have a thunderstorm every two days.

Although the number of fatalities has decreased, lightning is no less common than it was in the past. The reason for the decrease in deaths is that fewer people work out in the open. Those most at risk today include sports people, especially golfers: dozens are struck worldwide each year.

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For centuries, however, there was little anyone could do to protect themselves or their property from lightning. And up until the 18th century, people were often given dramatic proof that lightning can strike in the same place several times. The campanile of San Marco in Venice has, to date, been severely damaged or destroyed nine times.

Lightning protection is more important today than ever. The widespread use of electronic technology means a surge of electricity caused by lightning could have devastating effects on a hospital, for example. If lightning were to strike one of the complex electronic systems we use, the consequences would be disastrous.

- 8 Why did the guests start doing "party-pieces"?
  - A Everyone wanted to sing.
  - B They were professional performers.
  - C No one could think of anything else to talk about.
  - D They were curious about Peter Brown's skills.
- 9 Who was Peter Brown?
  - A one of the dinner guests
  - B a fortune teller
  - C a television star
  - D a stage performer
- 10 What did Peter Brown ask the writer to do?
  - A call out the numbers
  - B mix the numbers up
  - C repeat the numbers
  - D write the numbers down
- 11 What does "this" in line 12 refer to?
  - A writing numbers down
  - B saying numbers backwards
  - C give him a new list of numbers
  - D asking for numbers in a different order
- 12 How would anyone be able to do that trick?
  - A by learning lots of numbers
  - B by memorizing a few simple procedures
  - C by developing their speaking skills
  - D by learning party tricks
- 13 Why did the writer receive lots of requests to go to parties?
  - A He performed memory tricks.
  - B He was famous.
  - C He was memorable.
  - D He was fun to be with.
- 14 The improvement in the writer's memory was most obvious
  - A at parties.
  - B at home.
  - C at work.
  - D while travelling.
- 15 Why was the writer so popular at business meetings?
  - A Because he was clever.
  - B Because he remembered people's names.
  - C Because he wrote everything down.
  - D Because he could prove what he said.