

You are going to read a newspaper article about holidays. For questions 1–8, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

1.

Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

## Why I've taken a break from holidays

It's a wonderful morning, as I write this: hot, but without being too hot. Outside my window, I can see the bluest, sunniest sky of the year reflected in a huge natural expanse of water. It's the kind of sun that makes you acutely aware of summer's temporary nature – a reminder that if I am ever going to get around to booking this year's holiday, time is running out. For a moment, the idea of sitting on a beach in a place where this kind of weather is nothing remarkable, catching up on my reading, sounds tempting, but then a tension begins to rise in my chest and the temptation passes.

It is now close to four years since I last took a holiday. This is because I have come to the conclusion, over the course of my adult life, that I am not very good at it. You might think this sounds like saying you're not very good at drinking tea or listening to music. What could possibly be difficult about the natural act of putting your working life on hold for a couple of weeks and going somewhere warm to do nothing?

To be honest, I'm a little baffled myself. I was a model holidaymaker as a kid: every July, I would arrive at an Italian campsite with my parents and, within a couple of days, my skin would have turned an olive colour and I would blend into my surroundings so totally that I would often find myself being mistakenly told to join a party of local schoolchildren. The problems started during my early twenties: a stolen tent and wallet at the Glastonbury Festival in 1995; a lightning strike and sudden drop in altitude on a flight over the Channel in 1997; an ill-fated experiment in 'luxury inter-railing' in 1998 that lasted just four days and ended with the French police mistaking me for a drug smuggler.

But even if I manage to go away without being mugged or getting food poisoning, I now find that I can't really commit to the experience. A fancy-free trip to the South of France five years ago to 'just kind of hang out on the coast' was ended after just

two days, mainly because I had an urge to check my e-mails. Similarly, my honeymoon, a year or so later, was cut short by 48 hours – not because my wife and I weren't enjoying ourselves, but because we were missing our cats.

So what is my problem? On the surface, I'm probably a bit of a homebody. And I just find the pressure of being on holiday too severe: it always feels like having a gun held to my head and being forced to have fun. Somehow, packing a carefully itemised list of possessions and meeting a scheduled flight has none of the excitement of suddenly deciding to take a day off and driving somewhere for the fun of it.

Thankfully, I'm not alone. This summer, most of my friends have decided not to have a break. And a recent survey highlighted the downside of holidays, with the results showing that nearly two thirds of people found that the calming effects of a holiday wore off within 24 hours, as stress levels returned to normal. And this year *The Idler* magazine published its *Book of Awful Holidays*. Here you will find a list of the five most ecologically-damaging vacations it's possible to take, along with 50 horrific holiday experiences voted for on *The Idler* website. Over the last decade, *The Idler* has become well known for promoting the idea of an easy, lazy life. The leisure industry might seem an unlikely target of its criticism, but Dan Kiernan, the book's editor, says that he was flooded with entries from readers for his list of Awful Holidays.

'What interests me is what the concept of a "holiday" says about the rest of our lives,' he explains. 'We all seem content to slave away for 48 weeks a year and only get four off. For me, the point of living is to have a life you enjoy for 52 weeks a year. He has a point. The more I like my life and the better I structure it, the less I want to go away. Maybe I'm weird for not liking holidays, but I just feel my leisure time is too valuable to waste on them.'

You are going to read an article about maps showing the homes of film stars. Seven sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences A–H the one which fits each gap (9–15). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

2.

Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

## Maps of the stars

Ever since the 1910s, when film-makers like Cecil B. DeMille first set up shop in Hollywood, mapmakers, the explorers of the city's social terrain, have been compiling that only-in-Los Angeles fixture, maps showing the locations of the fabulous homes of the stars. Collectively, they form an unofficial version of the Oscars, reflecting who's in and who's out in the film world. 'Each one looks different,' says Linda Welton, whose grandfather and mother pioneered these maps. 9 \_\_\_\_\_ Former icons vanish from them, new ones appear on them, and some of the truly greats are permanent fixtures on them.

In 1933, noticing the steady stream of tourists drifting westward to follow the stars from Hollywood to Beverly Hills, the nearby district where most of the stars went to live, Ms Welton's grandfather, Wesley G Lake, obtained a copyright for his *Guide to Starland Estates and Mansions*. 10 \_\_\_\_\_ For 40 years Ms Welton's mother, Vivienne E Welton, sold maps just down the road from Gary Cooper's place at 200 Baroda\*. The asterisk indicates that it was the actor's final home, as opposed to a plus sign (denoting a former home) or a zero (for no view from the street).

'My grandfather asked Mom to talk to the gardeners to find out where the stars lived,' Ms Welton recalls. 'She'd say: "Oh, this is a beautiful garden. Who lives here?" Who would suspect a little girl?' Ms Welton and her crew now sell about 10,000 maps a year from a folding chair parked curbside six days a week. 11 \_\_\_\_\_

The evolution of the maps mirrors both the Hollywood publicity machine and real estate and tourism development. 12 \_\_\_\_\_ The first celebrity home, according to Marc Wanamaker, a historian and a founder of the Westwood and Beverly Hills Historical Societies, belonged to the artist Paul de Longpre. He had a luxuriously-landscaped house at Cahuenga Avenue and Hollywood and real estate agents would take prospective clients past it on tours.



Although it is not known for certain who published the first map, by the mid-1920s all sorts of people were producing them. 13 \_\_\_\_\_

One of the most famous of the early maps was produced to show the location of Pickfair, the sprawling home of the newly married stars Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks Sr, and the homes of some of their star friends. During World War I, they opened their home to serve refreshments to soldiers. As Vivienne Welton once explained in an interview with *Mercator's World*, a map and cartography magazine, 'She urged a few friends to do the same. 14 \_\_\_\_\_'

For over 40 years, people have marched toward the corner of Sunset and Baroda with hand-painted yellow signs saying: 'Star Maps, 2 blocks', 'Star Maps, 1 block', 'Star Maps here'. The maps reflect the shifting geography of stardom as celebrities, seeking escape from over-enthusiastic fans, some with ill intentions, have moved out to Pacific Palisades or the Pacific Coast Highway in Malibu. 15 \_\_\_\_\_ Legendary stars – Garbo, Monroe, Chaplin – remain on them. Others, however, hang on for about a decade and then vanish.

- The writer says in the first paragraph that while he is writing this article,
  - he feels envious of people who are on holiday.
  - he realizes it is too late to book a holiday.
  - he wishes that the weather would change.
  - he experiences a brief desire to book a holiday.
- What does the writer suggest about the fact that he has not taken a holiday for four years?
  - Some people may find the reason surprising.
  - He often has to explain the reason to other people.
  - There have been times when he has regretted it.
  - It is not something he has thought about before.
- What is the writer describing in the third paragraph?
  - events that explain why he has never really liked holidays
  - events that he regards as not typical of most people's experiences
  - events that illustrate his contrasting experiences of holidays
  - events that he did not consider particularly serious when they happened
- The events the writer describes in the fourth paragraph illustrate
  - how hard he has tried to enjoy holidays.
  - how badly he behaves when he is on holiday.
  - his fear that something bad will happen when he is on holiday.
  - his lack of enthusiasm for being on holiday.
- The writer says in the fifth paragraph that the main thing he dislikes about holidays is that
  - they are often organized in order to please other people.
  - they are far less enjoyable than breaks that have not been planned in advance.
  - he tends to be made responsible for too much of the organization of them.
  - he feels embarrassed when other people are having fun but he isn't.
- The writer says that a recent survey shows that a lot of people
  - pretend to enjoy their holidays.
  - fail to relax while they are on holiday.
  - feel that the benefits of going on holiday are limited.
  - have made the same decision as the writer and most of his friends.
- The writer says that the book published by *The Idler* magazine
  - illustrates a point that the magazine has often made.
  - proved more popular than he would have expected.
  - focuses entirely on bad personal experiences of holidays.
  - indicates that his dislike of holidays is widely shared.
- When the writer says 'He has a point' in the final paragraph, he is agreeing that
  - people who like their normal lives don't need to go on holiday.
  - some people need to have holidays but others don't.
  - not liking holidays is generally considered strange.
  - a lot of people don't really want to go on holiday.

- As they do so, they give advice to the tourists on star safaris through the lime green landscape of Beverly Hills.
- Studios like Paramount published the names and addresses of its stars on theirs, and businesses distributed them as a promotional gimmick.
- Others, however, say that the star maps are still an essential part of Hollywood and the film world.
- More profoundly, perhaps, the maps suggest the temporary nature of fame.
- Early film stars like Lillian Gish lived in modest, somewhat grubby rooming houses, taking street cars to and from the studio.
- Updated regularly, they are still for sale at the corner of Sunset Boulevard and Baroda Drive.
- And so a map was needed.
- It is the oldest continuously published star map and one of a half-dozen or so maps of varying degrees of accuracy and spelling correctness sold today.

TEST

4

Reading