

Part 1

You are going to read an extract from a novel. For questions 1 – 8, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

I shifted uncomfortably inside my best suit and eased a finger inside the tight white collar. It was hot in the little bus and I had taken a seat on the wrong side where the summer sun beat on the windows. It was a strange outfit for the weather, but a few miles ahead my future employer might be waiting for me and I had to make a good impression.

There was a lot depending on this interview. Many friends who had qualified with me were unemployed or working in shops or as labourers in the shipyards. So many that I had almost given up hope of any future for myself as a veterinary surgeon.

There were usually two or three jobs advertised in the *Veterinary Record* each week and an average of eighty applicants for each one. It hadn't seemed possible when the letter came from Darrowby in Yorkshire. Mr S. Farnon would like to see me on the Friday afternoon; I was to come to tea and, if we were suited to each other, I could stay on as his assistant. Most young people emerging from the colleges after five years of hard work were faced by a world unimpressed by their enthusiasm and bursting knowledge. So I had grabbed the lifeline unbelievably.

The driver crashed his gears again as we went into another steep bend. We had been climbing steadily now for the last fifteen miles or so, moving closer to the distant blue of the Pennine Hills. I had never been in Yorkshire before, but the name had always raised a picture of a region as heavy and unromantic as the pudding of the same name; I was prepared for solid respectability, dullness and a total lack of charm. But as the bus made its way higher, I began to wonder. There were high grassy hills and wide valleys. In the valley bottoms, rivers twisted among the trees and solid grey stone farmhouses lay among islands of cultivated land which pushed up the wild, dark hillsides.

Suddenly, I realised the bus was clattering along a narrow street which opened onto a square where we stopped. Above the window of a small grocer's shop I read 'Darrowby Co-operative Society'. We had arrived. I got out and stood beside my battered suitcase, looking about me. There was something unusual and I didn't know what it was at first. Then it came to me. The other passengers had dispersed, the driver had switched off the engine and there was not a sound or a movement anywhere. The only visible sign of life was a group of old men sitting round the clock tower in the centre of the square, but they might have been carved of stone.

Darrowby didn't get much space in the guidebooks, but where it was mentioned it was described as a grey little town on the River Arrow with a market place and little of interest except its two ancient bridges. But when you looked at it, its setting was beautiful. Everywhere from the windows of houses in Darrowby you could see the hills. There was a clearness in the air, a sense of space and airiness that made me feel I had left something behind. The pressure of the city, the noise, the smoke – already they seemed to be falling away from me.

Trengate Street was a quiet road leading off the square and from there I had my first sight of Skeldale House. I knew it was the right place before I was near enough to read *S. Farnon, Veterinary Surgeon* on the old-fashioned brass nameplate. I knew by the ivy which grew untidily over the red brick, climbing up to the topmost windows. It was what the letter had said – the only house with ivy; and this could be where I would work for the first time as a veterinary surgeon. I rang the doorbell.

- 1 As he travelled, the writer regretted his choice of
- A seat.
 - B clothes.
 - C career.
 - D means of transport.
- 2 What had surprised the writer about the job?
- A There had been no advertisement.
 - B He had been contacted by letter.
 - C There was an invitation to tea.
 - D He had been selected for interview.
- 3 The writer uses the phrase 'I had grabbed the lifeline' (line 15) to show that he felt
- A confident of his ability.
 - B ready to consider any offer.
 - C cautious about accepting the invitation.
 - D forced to make a decision unwillingly.
- 4 What impression had the writer previously had of Yorkshire?
- A It was a beautiful place.
 - B It was a boring place.
 - C It was a charming place.
 - D It was an unhappy place.
- 5 What did the writer find unusual about Darrowby?
- A the location of the bus stop
 - B the small number of shops
 - C the design of the square
 - D the lack of activity
- 6 What did the writer feel the guidebooks had missed about Darrowby?
- A the beauty of the houses
 - B the importance of the bridges
 - C the lovely views from the town
 - D the impressive public spaces
- 7 How did the writer recognise Skeldale House?
- A The name was on the door.
 - B It had red bricks.
 - C There was a certain plant outside.
 - D It stood alone.
- 8 How did the writer's attitude change during the passage?
- A He began to feel he might like living in Darrowby.
 - B He became less enthusiastic about the job.
 - C He realised his journey was likely to have been a waste of time.
 - D He started to look forward to having the interview.

Part 2

You are going to read an article about a woman who is a downhill mountain-bike racer. 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.

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

Downhill racer

Anna Jones tells of her move from skiing to downhill mountain biking and her rapid rise up the ranks to her current position as one of the top five downhill racers in the country.

At the age of seven I had learnt to ski and by fourteen I was competing internationally. When I was eighteen a close friend was injured in a ski race, and as a result, I gave up competitive skiing. To fill the gap that skiing had left I decided to swap two planks of wood for two wheels with big tyres.

My first race was a cross-country race in 1995. It wasn't an amazing success. **9** After entering a few more cross-country races, a local bike shop gave me a downhill bike to try. I entered a downhill race, fell off, but did reasonably well in the end, so I switched to downhill racing.

I think my skiing helped a lot as I was able to transfer several skills such as cornering and weight-balance to mountain biking. This year I'm riding for a famous British team and there are races almost every weekend from March through to September. **10** In fact, there's quite a lot of putting up tents in muddy fields.

Last season I was selected to represent Great Britain at both the European and World Championships. Both events were completely different from the UK race scene. **11** I was totally in awe, racing with the riders I had been following in magazines. The atmosphere was electric and I finished about mid-pack.

Mountain biking is a great sport to be in. People ask me if downhill racing is really scary. I say, 'Yes it is, and I love it.' Every time I race I scare myself silly and then say, 'Yeah let's do it again.'

When you're riding well, you are right on the edge, as close as you can be to being out of control. **12** However, you quickly learn how to do it so as not to injure yourself. And it's part of the learning process as you have to push yourself and try new skills to improve.

Initially, downhill racing wasn't taken seriously as a mountain-biking discipline. **13** But things are changing and riders are now realising that they need to train just as hard for downhill racing as they would do for cross-country.

The races are run over ground which is generally closer to vertical than horizontal, with jumps, drop-offs, holes, corners and nasty rocks and trees to test your nerves as well as technical skill. At the end of a run, which is between two and three minutes in this country your legs hurt so much they burn. **14** But in a race, you're so excited that you switch off to the pain until you've finished.

A lot of people think that you need to spend thousands of pounds to give downhill mountain biking a go. **15** A reasonable beginner's downhill bike will cost you around £400 and the basic equipment, of a cycle helmet, cycle shorts and gloves, around £150. Later on you may want to upgrade your bike and get a full-face crash helmet, since riders are now achieving speeds of up to 80 kilometres per hour.

A I've fallen off more times than I care to remember.

B I usually have to stop during practice sessions.

C The courses were twice as long and the crowds were twice as big.

D I'm not strong enough in my arms, so I've been doing a lot of upper-body training this year.

E The attitude was: how much skill do you need to sit on a saddle and point a bike in the same direction for a few minutes?

F I finished last, but it didn't matter as I really enjoyed it.

G Nothing could be further from the truth.

H It's not all stardom and glamour, though.

Part 3

You are going to read a magazine article about people who collect things. For questions **16 – 30**, choose from the people (**A – D**). The people may be chosen more than once.

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

Which person

had to re-start their collection?	16	<input type="text"/>
has provided useful advice on their subject?	17	<input type="text"/>
was misled by an early success?	18	<input type="text"/>
received an unexpected gift?	19	<input type="text"/>
admits to making little practical use of their collection?	20	<input type="text"/>
regrets the rapid disappearance of certain items?	21	<input type="text"/>
is aware that a fuller collection of items exists elsewhere?	22	<input type="text"/>
has a history of collecting different items?	23	<input type="text"/>
performed a favour for someone they knew?	24	<input type="text"/>
is a national expert on their subject?	25	<input type="text"/>
is aware that they form part of a growing group?	26	<input type="text"/>
insists on purchasing top-quality items?	27	<input type="text"/>
noticed items while looking for something else?	28	<input type="text"/>
has to protect their collection from damage?	29	<input type="text"/>
would like to create a hands-on display of their collection?	30	<input type="text"/>

The World of Collecting

A **Ron Barton** shares his home with about 200 sewing machines. His passion began when he was searching for bits of second-hand furniture and kept seeing 'beautiful old sewing machines that were next to nothing to buy'. He couldn't resist them. Then a friend had a machine that wouldn't work, so she asked Barton to look at it for her. At that stage he was not an authority on the subject, but he worked on it for three days and eventually got it going.

Later he opened up a small stand in a London market. 'Most people seemed uninterested. Then a dealer came and bought everything I'd taken along. I thought, "Great! This is my future life." But after that I never sold another one there and ended up with a stall in another market which was only moderately successful.'

Nowadays, he concentrates on domestic machines in their original box containers with their handbooks. He is often asked if he does any sewing with them. The answer is that, apart from making sure that they work, he rarely touches them.

B As a boy, **Chris Peters** collected hundreds of vintage cameras, mostly from jumble sales and dustbins. Later, when the time came to buy his first house, he had to sell his valuable collection in order to put down a deposit. A few years after, he took up the interest again and now has over a thousand cameras, the earliest dating from 1860.

Now Peters 'just cannot stop collecting' and hopes to open his own photographic museum where members of the public will be able to touch and fiddle around with the cameras. Whilst acknowledging that the Royal Camera Collection in Bath is probably more extensive than his own, he points out that 'so few of the items are on show there at the same time that I think my own personal collection will easily rival it.'

C **Sylvia King** is one of the foremost authorities on plastics in Britain. She has, in every corner of her house, a striking collection of plastic objects of every kind, dating from the middle of the last century and illustrating the complex uses of plastic over the years.

King's interest started when she was commissioned to write her first book. In order to do this, she had to start from scratch; so she attended a course on work machinery, maintaining that if she didn't understand plastics manufacture then nobody else would.

As she gathered information for her book, she also began to collect pieces of plastic from every imaginable source: junk shops, arcades, and the cupboards of friends. She also collects 'because it is vital to keep examples. We live in an age of throw-away items: tape-recorders, cassettes, hair dryers – they are all replaced so quickly.'

King's second book, *Classic Plastics: from Bakelite to High Tech*, is the first published guide to plastics collecting. It describes collections that can be visited and gives simple and safe home tests for identification.

King admits that 'plastic is a mysterious substance and many people are frightened of it. Even so, the band of collectors is constantly expanding.'

D **Janet Pontin** already had twenty years of collecting one thing or another behind her when she started collecting 'art deco' fans in 1966. It happened when she went to an auction sale and saw a shoe-box filled with them. Someone else got them by offering a higher price and she was very cross. Later, to her astonishment, he went round to her flat and presented them to her. 'That was how it all started.' There were about five fans in the shoe-box and since then they've been exhibited in the first really big exhibition of 'art deco' in America. The fans are not normally on show, however, but are kept behind glass. They are extremely fragile and people are tempted to handle them. The idea is to have, one day, a black-lacquered room where they can be more easily seen.

Pontin doesn't restrict herself to fans of a particular period, but she will only buy a fan if it is in excellent condition. The same rule applies to everything in her house.