

Bits of News I

Read the following short texts and then show that you have understood them.
Mark the best alternative – A, B, C or D.

Texting

The stripped-down form of writing that goes with texting has been with us for more than 120 years, dismissing claims that standards of English are declining. Abbreviations like ‘hw r u’ and ‘I’m pty wl’ were already common in telegraphic communication. A newspaper magazine noted in 1890: “Telegraphers use abbreviations to say considerably more in a certain period of time”.

1 What is said about texting?

- A It is not a present-day innovation
- B It is criticised by many historians
- C It is considered to be poor language
- D It is not fashionable with reporters

Fanatic

A Julia Roberts fanatic has tattooed his body with 82 images of her face, spending a small fortune. It started after he watched her in *Erin Brockovich*, a film about a legal assistant who brings down a US energy company single handedly. The actress is pictured in artwork inspired by film scenes. As long as he has the space on his body, his tribute will continue, he says.

2 This text is about...

- A an unusual souvenir
- B a well-known movie
- C an expensive interest
- D a talented photographer

Nutcrackers

When it comes to birdbrained ideas, the Japanese crow has set a cracking pace. In Japan, learner drivers are not allowed out on to the roads until they have passed their driving tests. Before that, they practise in a sort of grown-up miniature park and the crows have discovered that if they drop walnuts from above the cars and fly down after them, the cars crack open the nuts. The traffic is slow-moving enough for them to land and pick up the pieces.

3 Another suitable title for this item would be...

- A Traffic Problems
- B Clever Birds
- C Japanese Theme Park
- D Driving Tests

4 In Japan the learner drivers have to...

- A pick up pieces of walnuts
- B crack crow nuts
- C practise braking gently
- D train in a special area



Photo: Richard McDonald (cc-by-sa 3.0)



Bruno the Swan

There once was an ugly duckling, but when this particular bird grew into a handsome swan he was not admired for his beauty, but feared for his viciousness. Bruno, a black swan from Australia, was obtained as a substitute for another swan killed by a fox. He soon began to make his presence felt by attacking patients, nurses and doctors at Conquest Hospital. Soon, anyone passing the lake on the grounds of the hospital at Hastings, East Sussex, became his victim and warning signs were put up. After Bruno was given a final chance, he went for the former mayor of nearby Rye, Robert Beckwith, who said: "The bird attacked me from behind and hauled me to the ground. It was very powerful so I kicked it in the chest to get it off. It then chased others around the lake and nurses had to help them escape." Bruno and his mate have now been removed to a sanctuary at Egham, Surrey. The hospital is to replace them with two hand-reared swans.

5 Another suitable title for the text is...

- A The Ugly Black Swan
- B The Fate of a Savage Swan
- C Swan Saved by Mayor
- D Swan Attacked by Doctor

6 What is true about Bruno?

- A He is a character in a fairy tale
- B He fought with his mates
- C He was nasty to people
- D He was nearly killed by a fox

7 What happened to Bruno in the end?

- A He was taken to an animal refuge
- B He was chased off the hospital grounds
- C He was put to sleep at Egham
- D He escaped to the other side of the lake

Bits of News II

Read the following short texts and then show that you have understood them. Mark the best alternative – A, B, C or D.

1 Lucky Pet

Jerry, a 12-month-old tabby cat, survived a 15-minute spin after climbing inside a tumble dryer at its owner's home in Selly Oak, Birmingham.

The text is about...

- A a purring kitten
- B an adventure in the laundry room
- C a cat that can do funny tricks
- D a pet that escaped from home

2 Noisy Device

An underwater device which makes loud noises is the latest invention salmon farmers have introduced to keep seals away from their fish cages. However, seals are pretty smart, and once they have discovered the noise is associated with a salmon farm, it is a signal saying, "It's mealtime".

It is suggested that...

- A salmon have to be fed at fixed hours
- B fish farming is a business in difficulty
- C seals do not prefer salmon to other fish
- D a device does not serve its purpose

3 Gardening

Commercial flower growers are planting trip wires and alarms in daffodil beds to combat gangs of snatchers who clear fields overnight.

The text is about...

- A gardeners protecting flowers
- B fast-growing daffodils
- C means of controlling insects
- D friendly flower pickers



Daffodil. Photo:BerndH (cc-by-sa 3.0)



Photo: Aaron Logan

4 Smart Chimps

Sharing food may be a generous act, but there is often something in it for the sharer as well. It can be used to gain favors, pursue a potential partner, or even to show off. It's true for chimpanzees as well as people, only what chimps share isn't a big box of candy. Researchers from the University of Stirling in Scotland observed chimps in the West African country of Guinea for two years. In 58 of 59 instances of food sharing, male chimps shared food stolen from nearby farms, including papaya, oranges and cassava. And in most cases, they offered some of the loot to a female chimp of reproductive age. Researchers add that the chimps may also be showing off by stealing the food, perhaps as a way to intimidate other males with their bold behavior. Further study may provide insight into the evolution of food sharing among humans as to how we got to the point where sharing a box of chocolates helps build social relationships.

4a Why might some chimps share food?

- A They want others to join them for raids ☐
- B They want to keep the troop together ☐
- C They may want to threaten older males ☐
- D They might want to attract a female ☐

4b What parallels are made in the text between chimps and humans?

- A They prefer fruit and chocolate to meat ☐
- B They don't mind sharing sweets ☐
- C They use food to impress others ☐
- D They like locally produced food ☐

5 Tasty Gum

Four mornings a week, Sue McNamara sits in a spotless room in a lab coat, chews gum, and talks about how it tastes. McNamara is a gum taster at a commercial science and technology center in Whippany, N.J. “I have lawyer friends who tell me they want my job,” she says. But these are not easy jobs to get. Only ten percent of Americans are able to distinguish, say, between strawberry flavors that are green, gritty, or jammy, and the nearly 70 other ingredients in a wad of chewing gum. The company weeds out hundreds of candidates in finding its tasters. Those who make the cut undergo six months of training to learn the terminology and measurement techniques used to evaluate gum.

What is said about a particular job?

- A It attracts many people
- B It is not difficult to get
- C Legal experience is required
- D Applicants take an exam

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6 Food for Thought

Farmers in the UK have expressed concern over the number of children in both rural and urban areas that have a complete lack of knowledge about where their food comes from before it arrives at the shops. Keith Siddorn, who gives tours to children on his farm, said that a lot of children could not identify where the animal pork comes from and many get confused about how beef and milk can both come from cows. “They don't even know whether a carrot is grown in the ground or on a tree. As far as they know, their food comes in a plastic bag from the shop and after that it is very blurred for them,” said Siddorn.

What is said in the text?

- A Guided tours of farms are popular with young people
- B Educational standards are falling in villages and towns
- C Little seems to be known about the origin of food
- D Large numbers of shops are environmentally friendly

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Photo: Kumbayo

Bedömningsanvisning

Bits of News I

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	C	B	D	B	C	A

Bits of News II

1	2	3	4a	4b	5	6
B	D	A	D	C	A	C