**Тексты для чтения для устного экзамена по английскому языку**

**(Контрольное чтение, перевод всех текстов. Новые слова записать в словарик и выучить наизусть)**

**Чтение**

**Text №1**

Woodman shy the is a small town. About 3,000 people live here. It is unusual for a town of this size to have a good cinema. It is even more “unusual, however, to have a cinema that is run by a group of 12 people. The group is a real mixture: there is a businessman, two teenage school-children, three housewives, four old-age pensioners, a school-teacher, and the local vicar. Major Richard Danby is the oldest of the group. He is 73 and he lives in the small flat above the cinema. He is the caretaker and is always ready — and proud—to show visitors the cinema, and to talk about it.

“It all started ten years ago. There was a large store here which was for sale. A couple of us old people thought that it would be the ideal place for an activity centre. Not just for pensioners, but for the young ones too. There wasn’t anywhere where people could get together. Then by chance we heard that the cinema in Workshop — that’s our nearest big town — was closing down. So we thought «Bingo!” All its equipment was for sale. I contacted Jim Breasley, who is our financial brain, and before we knew where we were, we had plans drawn up for a cinema here. He did all the calculations, and we were promised a lot of help by the town council. A couple of companies has given us money as well. We made a broad group of twelve people representing all ages and interests — as far as possible, anyway — and this very nice cinema is the result of it!”

The cinema shows films five nights a week (not on Sundays and Mondays). There are also two afternoon programmes a week for children. Old age pensioners have the cinema two mornings a month, and there is a film club that uses the cinema once a fortnight.

“We try to show a mixture of films: we try to get the very newest ones, we show some of the old classics, and we have had one or two of the violent films as well. That always gives a good bit of discussion afterwards!”

The discussions take place in the cafeteria, which is a large room at the side of ‘the foyer. It is open in the mornings and afternoons as well, and many people enjoy just dropping in here for a chat and something to drink. “It’s all part of the centre-idea, you see,” says Major Danby proudly.

1. Who is the cinema in Wood man shy the run by?  
2. Who is the cinema for?  
3. What kinds of films are shown at the cinema?  
4.  What do people usually do after watching films?

**Text №2**

If you leave the main street and turn right, you are in Amina’s world. The people in the street are «foreign-looking» — they look like Indians or Pakistanis, and they or their parents certainly originated from Asia. The shops in this area sell foreign goods. The windows are filled with saris and turbans, exotic shawls, unusual perfumes, incense, and books written in letters that an ordinary European cannot read. The grocers sell spices and vegetables not normally to be found in English kitchen, and the cinemas advertise Indian films. The travel agents offer cut-price flights to New Delhi and Karachi.

If you come here in the evening or on Sunday, the streets are almost as busy as they are during an ordinary weekday. The grocers are open and life goes on as usual.

Amina stands behind the counter in her little grocer’s shop on the comer. Her two children play in the back. Most of her customers are Asians, two or three are Europeans. “We are open every day,” she says. “I open at 9.30 every day, except for Sundays, when I open at10 o’clock. The shop closes at 10.30 in the evening — again Sunday is different, we close at5 o’clock. Of course I close in the middle of the day for a good long break. I would like to close the shop altogether on Sundays, but it is not possible. There is too much competition here. We are saving up to buy a bigger shop with a back garden for the children to play in while I am working. We don’t want to move far away, because the people are friendly here. There is no real prejudice against us. We try to fit into the English way of life as much as possible. I draw the line at wearing English clothes, though I am too fond of my sari. The children are a little divided. They have been on one trip to India, where my parents still live. They liked it very much there, but when we came back to London, they settled down very quickly. My husband has got a good job here with a computer firm, so I am sure we will stay here. I don’t know how the children will grow up. I hope they will fit into the English society without too much trouble. It isn’t always so easy. At the same time I hope they will remain good Indians—good Hindus. The most important thing for them is to be happy — to have a good education, and for us to find good marriage partners for them. Then I will be happy too”.

1.                 What do people in Amina’s world look like?

2.                What does Amina’s shop look like?

3.                Why don’t Amina and her husband want to move far away from where they live?

4.                 Does  Amina’s shop work on Sundays?

**Text №3**

Thirty years ago my family were one of the lucky ones and went on holiday, once a year for a week. They went every year to the nearest seaside resort where there were a few traditionally run hotels, a beach, a little town and that was it. Today tourism is big business throughout the world and our expectations and life styles have greatly altered.

There are those people, especially environmentalists, who see the growth of tourism as a disaster for the environment as well as local cultures. Tourism has often meant huge hotel complexes, swimming pools, pollution and over­crowding that have destroyed many local communities. This has been the case on the Costa del Sol in Spain, which has been literally invaded by tourists for the past few decades. As the tourists start to look for more exotic places to go on holiday, the problem with protecting yet unspoiled areas in, for example, South East Asia, Central America and Africa grows.

Many of us have laughed at the commercial that shows an American tourist group on a sightseeing coach in Norway. Whenever the guide points out a local sight of interest, someone on the coach spots a McDonald’s or another American Company on the other side of the coach, and everyone’s attention is drawn to that. This is a good example of how many people, who go abroad on holiday, are actually more interested in experiencing familiar surroundings than discovering the local culture. As a result, travel companies try to make the resorts look as much as possible like the environment the tourists are used to.

Yet the growth of tourism has opened up parts of the world and enabled travelers to go to places they could only have dreamed of thirty years ago. The meeting of different cultures in this way has led to a greater mingling of peoples and cultures and habits. Take food for example: Italian dishes such as spaghetti and Spanish rice dishes such as paella, are nowadays eaten all over the world.

On a more serious level, tourism is often the developing countries’ most important source of income. Foreign tourists bring in much needed foreign currency and this can help that country buy equipment and goods from abroad. In this way tourism is good for an area of the country.

1.                Where do tourists today try to find more exotic places for a holiday?

2.                What is a good example of how many people, who do abroad, are actually more interested in experiencing familiar surroundings than discovering the local culture?

3.                What does tourism bring to the economy of different countries?

4.                What dishes are nowadays eaten all over the world?

**Text №4**

Albert Foreman had been a verger’ atSt.Peter’s church inNeville Squarefor sixteen years. Albert Edward was very proud of his job and his church. But there was one special feature about Albert: he couldn’t read or write. When one day a new vicar discovered this, he told him that unless he learnt to read and write within three months, he would lose his job. Albert refused and that evening he sadly locked the church and began to walk home.

As he walked along the street he looked for a shop to buy a packet of Gold Flake2. It was a long street but there was not a single shop where he could buy cigarettes.

“That’s strange,” Albert said to himself. “That’s an idea!”

Next day he went along the street and by good luck found a little shop to let. Twenty-four hours later he had taken it, and a month after that set up in business as a tobacconist and newsagent. He did so well that in ten years he had acquired no less than ten shops and he was making money hand over fist. One morning when he was at the bank the cashier told him that the manager would like to see him.

“Mr. Foreman,” said the manager, “I wanted to have a talk with you about the money you’ ve got with us. It’s a very large sum and I think you would do better to invest it”.

A troubled look appeared on Mr. Foreman’s face. “I’ve never had anything to do with investments,” he said.

“We’ll do everything. All you’ll have to do is just sign some forms”.

“But how should I know what I was signing?”

“I suppose you can read,” said the manager a little sharply.

“Well, sir, that’s just it. I can’t. I can’t read or write, only my name, and I only learnt to do that when I went into business”.

The manager was so surprised that he jumped up from his chair. “That’s the most extraordinary thing I’ve ever heard. And do you mean to say that you made a fortune of thirty thousand pounds without being able to read or write? Good God, man, what would you now be if you had been able to?”

“I’d be a verger of St. Peter’s,Neville Square”.

**1** **a verger** — someone who looks after a church

**2** **Gold Flake** — a once-popular brand of cigarette

1.                How many years did Albert Edward work as a verger?

2.                What kind of business did Albert Foreman start?

3.                Why did Albert have a troubled look when he had heard the manager’s offer?

4.                What was the manager’s reaction when he had learned the truth about Mr. Foreman?

**Text №5**

**James Mitford:** My wife and I only had the one child. It might have been nice to have a son, but we didn’t plan a family, we just had Amy.

I see her as my best friend. I think she’d always come to me first if she had a problem. We have the same sense of humour, and share interests. I don’t mind animals, but she’s completely obsessed with them, and she has always had dogs, cats, horses, and goldfish in her life.

We were closest when she was about four, which I think is a lovely age for a child. They know the parents best, and don’t have the outside contacts. She must have grown up suddenly when she went to school, because I remember her growing away from her family slightly. Any father who has a teenager daughter comes across an extraordinary collection of people, and there seemed to be an endless stream of strange young men coming through our house. By the time I’d learned their names they’d gone away and I had to start learning a new lot. I remember I told her offence in front of her friends and she didn’t talk to me for days afterwards.

I wanted more than anything else for her to be happy in what she was doing, and I was prepared to pull strings to help her on her way. She went to a good school, but that didn’t work out. She must have upset somebody. When she left she decided she wanted to become an actress so I got her into drama school. It wasn’t to her liking so she joined a theatre group and began doing bits and pieces of films. She was doing well, but then gave it up. She probably found it boring. Then she took up social work, and finally went to work for a designer and he became her husband. And that’s really the story of her life. She must be happy with him—they’re always together.

We have the same tastes in books and music, but it takes me a while to get used to new pop songs. I used to take her to the opera, which is my big passion, but I don’t think she likes it very much, she doesn’t come with me any more.

I don’t think she’s a big television watcher. She knows when I’m on, and she might watch, but I don’t know. It’s not the kind of thing she tells me.

We’re very grateful for Amy. She’s a good daughter as daughters go. We’re looking forward to being grandparents.

I’m sure she’ll have a son.

1.                 What did James and Amy have in common?

2.                 Why didn’t Amy talk to her father for days once?

3.                What was  Amy’s first profession?

4.                Why does James think that his daughter is happy with her husband?

**Text №6**

**Amy Mitford:** I don’t really know my father. He isn’t easy .to get on with. He’s quite self-centred, and a little bit vain, I think, and in some ways quite unapproachable. The public must think he’s very easy-going, but at home he keeps himself to himself.

He can’t have been at home much when I was a child, because I don’t remember much about him. He’s always been slightly out of touch with family life. His work always came first, and he was always off somewhere acting or rehearsing. He loves being asked for his autograph, he loves to be recognized. He has won several awards, and he’s very proud of that. He was given the Member of the British Empire, and we had to go to Buckingham Palace to get the medal. It was incredibly boring — there were hundreds of other people getting the same thing, and you had to sit there for hours. He shows off his awards to whoever comes to the house.

I went to public school, and because of my total lack of interest and non-attendance I was asked to leave. I didn’t want to go there in the first place. I was taken away from all my friends. He must have been very pleased to get me into the school, but in the end it was a complete waste of money. I let him down quite badly, I suppose. I tried several jobs but I couldn’t settle down in them. They just weren’t challenging enough. Then I realized that what I really wanted to do was live in the country and look after animals, so that’s what I now do.

As a family, we’re not that close, either emotionally or geographically. We don’t see much of each other these days. My father and I are totally different, like chalk and cheese. My interests have always been the country, but he’s into books, music and above all, opera, which I hate. If they do come to see us, they’re in completely the wrong clothes for the country — mink coats, nice little leather shoes, not exactly ideal for long walks across the fields.

He was totally opposed to me getting married. He was hoping we would breakup. Gerald’s too humble, I suppose. He must have wanted me to marry someone famous, but I didn’t, and that’s all there is to it. We don’t want children, but my father keeps on and on talking about wanting grandchildren. You can’t make someone have children just because you want grandchildren.

I never watch him on television. I’m not that interested, and anyway he usually forgets to tell me when he’s on.

1.                What does Amy think of her father as a person?

2.                Why doesn’t Amy remember much about her father?

3.                 Why does Amy feel guilty about her father sometimes?

4.                What is the difference between James’ and Amy’s interests?

**Text №7**

Nowadays the number of crimes involving violence is growing in Sweden as well as many other countries. The main cause of this development is undoubtedly the use of drugs especially in larger cities. The higher rate of unemployment and growing racism are significant reasons too. Meaningless murders and assaults1 are the frightening results. One can, as a consequence, see how people not only in countries like the United States, but also in countries like Sweden, arm themselves with weapons for protection, but violence breeds violence.

It is often claimed that an efficient way to lower the number of acts of violence is to have more severe sentences2. However, people who commit these crimes often have serious social and psychological problems. Many of them may therefore be indifferent to how severe the sentences are. Besides, these criminals do not think that they will ever get caught. Because of these reasons, I doubt that acts of violence in Sweden would decrease if our government was to make the sentences for this type of crime more severe.

A common measure to reduce the acts of violence is to increase the num­ber of policemen patrolling the streets. Although this is a good way of preventing acts of violence, it will not actually stop people from becoming criminals.

I am convinced that it is impossible to erase3 the violence related criminality completely, but there is a way in which I think it can be reduced considerably. Children should be informed about crimes related to violence and drugs. This information should be given in kindergarten as well as in elementary school. Furthermore, it should especially reach those children who live in areas with high crime rates. The information should take the form of a discussion, not a lecture, led by some expert, preferably a local police officer.

Hopefully, the children would then at an early age already have some understanding of these problems that would be valuable to them for the rest of their lives. Although the costs for such a project would be considerable, the benefits would be great. It would certainly prevent many from becoming violent criminals in the future.

**1** **assault** — нападение

**2** **sentence** — приговор, наказание

**3** **to erase** — уничтожать, ликвидировать

1.                 What do many people in different countries do to protect themselves?

2.                Why  educating people is important?

3.                What is the main cause of growing violence?

4.                What measures can help to protect people from violence?

**Text №8**

My Great Aunt’s name is Mary Grieve. She is my grandmother’s aunt. I do not know her very well having always lived a long way away, but she has always been a woman I have respected for many different reasons.

She is now over eighty years old and was born in Scotland in 1912. She had one brother called Tom. Her family was wealthy for those times and luckily for Mary, her father believed in educating both his children. He did not send her to one of the typical schools for daughters of the rich where they only learnt skills preparing them for marriage. She was obviously intelligent and when she left school she went to Oxford University.

In the 1930′s there were very few women at University. However Mary is not a quiet, submissive woman, in fact she has always been very determined and prepared to be different. At this time it was assumed that woman of her class would spend a few years enjoying her freedom and then settle down and get married. Mary did not do this.

After graduating from the university, she got a job in journalism. Newspapers were increasingly popular and to sell them to a wider audience some papers realised that appealing to women was important. She not only worked for newspapers but also wrote articles and books later in her life.

After the Second World War, she got a job with one of the new women’s magazines that were to become more and more popular. After many years of hard work and struggling in a male dominated profession she eventually reached the top and became the editor of the magazine.

Mary never married as her work was very important to her and a job and marriage did not mix in Britainin the 1950′s.

She is now old in years and confined to a wheelchair. However she is still full of enthusiasm about life. Her personal courage, her enthusiasm and interest in life, as well as the example she has set for all women working in our still male dominated society, makes Mary a woman I feel privileged to have known.

1.                Why Does the narrator know her Great Aunt very well?

2.                What kind of job did Mary get after graduating from the university?

3.                What always impressed the narrator in her Great Aunt?

4.                What job did Mary get after the Second World War?

**Text №9**

The setting is every child’s dream. A huge, rambling, 300-year-old house, warmed by log fires, overrun by pets, and set in acres of natural playground. And no school.

That is what makes the Kirkbride household so rare. James, 18, Tamara, 15, Tigger, 14, and Hoppy, 10, have spent the last four years doing what other children only enjoy at weekends and holidays.

They get up when they feel like it, breakfast at leisure, and spend the rest of the day doing what they want. They walk, swim, fish, paint, read, play musical instruments, cook or sit around and chat.

There has been no attempt at having any lessons since John and Melinda Kirkbride took their children out of the local school — James five years ago and the others a year later. Hoppy had been there only six days. “We did start with a sort of curriculum when we took James out,” says John, 46, a large forceful man. “But we soon realised we were repeating the mistakes of the system”.

“From the beginning, we both felt that packing our children off to school was wrong,” says Melinda, a German-born former actress. “Seeing their unhappiness made us re-examine our own school years, and remember how destructive they were”. John, formerly a TV producer, began a teachers’ training course in Norwich, “to see if I could reform from within”. He soon found he couldn’t and, after completing the course and teaching for four months, he removed himself and his children, from the system.

If the personalities of the children were the only criteria, the experiment would be an undoubted success. They are intelligent, confident, capable and considerate. All, including the two boys, cook and sew. Chores are shared without arguments. Their friendliness to each other, and to the many guests who visit the house, is natural and unforced.

“Teach is a swear word in this house,” says John. “It destroys the child’s own natural talent and creativity. Now learning—that’s a different matter. All our children learn when and if they want to learn something. They look it up in books or they go and ask someone who knows, they use their initiative — which is more than any school could teach them”.

1.                How many children do the Kirk brides have?

2.                Why did John and Melinda Kirk bride take their children from school?

3.                What are the children’s personalities like?

4.                What is the main principe of teaching according to the  Kirk brides household?

**Text №10**

The problems with my parents started when I was sixteen. I wanted to get a Saturday job but my parents ordered me to stay at home and study for my exams. Whenever I pointed out that all my friends had Saturday jobs, they always replied, «We don’t care what they do, it’s you we are worried about,» and yet, whenever my school marks were bad, I was always compared to everyone else. Their double standards infuriated me so much that I did whatever I could to provoke them. I purposely dyed my hair white blond and plastered my face in make-up before I went to school. However, all I managed to achieve was mass arguments before I went anywhere.

It was a rule in the house that I was only allowed out once during the week and on Saturday till 10 p.m. Every time I attempted to go out in the evening, my parents asked me who I was going out with and where we were going. They even insisted on my giving them my friend’s telephone number in case they needed to contact me. I always argued about the last bit; I felt that if I gave them the number they’d use it to check up on me. It never for one moment crossed my mind that they were just worried about me.

Once I asked if I could go to a party on Saturday night. The party finished at 11.30 p.m. They agreed, but on the condition that my Dad came to pick me up at 10 p.m. I argued and argued about it but in the end I had to agree. I knew I was going to be really embarrassed when my father came to pick me up, so I spent the whole party worrying. I didn’t speak to my parents for three days after that. My mother tried to explain how they both felt but I didn’t want to listen. It was then that I decided to break all the rules they had set down. So instead of coming home at 10 p.m., I would arrive back at 11.30 p.m. and then refuse to tell them where I had been. I somehow felt that if I broke their rules, they would realise I was old enough to look after myself and leave me alone. However, the argument got worse and worse, and the more they tried to keep me in the house, the more I sneaked out. Finally, one Saturday night I didn’t come home till 2 a.m. My father wanted to know why I was so late. I refused to tell him. We had a huge argument which ended with me getting a taxi to my sister’s house. What went wrong?

1.                When did Ann’s problems with her parents start?

2.                What rules were in the house?

3.                How often was she allowed to go out in the evening?

4.                Why didn’t Ann speak to her parents after the party?

**Text №11**

Anyone who has ever visited the centre of London cannot help but notice the number of young people who beg in the streets and some who probably steal as well. Last summer I returned to attend a summer language course in London and stayed in the same area I had visited five years earlier. I was shocked by the increase in the number of young homeless people, living and sleeping in the streets.

There are approximately 30,000 homeless people in and around London. This has worsened due to the long recession1 in Britain and the change in the social security system which doesn’t allow any person under 18, or those without a permanent address to receive any social benefits from the governments. The numbers of homeless are growing as more young people come to London, believing that they will find work and a place to live. Unfortunately London does not live up to their dreams and a vicious circle is created: without a job they have no money to rent a place to live and without a place to live they cannot get any government social benefits or a job.

My solution to this problem may be short term but at least it would be a start for many of these young people. Squatting2 should become legal again, as it once was in Britain. It is only recently that the law has been changed to make squatting illegal.

Surely it would be more profitable for the local council to let people squat in these houses if they are going to be empty for more than six months. These young people would then have an address and if over 18 years old, could get some benefits. They could then buy some decent clothes, tidy themselves up and have a greater chance of getting a job and a proper place to live. The houses may be in a bad condition but for homeless people this must surely be better than sleeping in the streets in the rain and cold. Somehow the vicious circle has to be broken.

**1** **recession** — worsening of economic activity

**2** **squatting** — occupying a house or a flat without permission

1.                What did the author do in London?

2.                Why are the numbers of homeless people growing?

3.                Why is the situation with homeless people like a vicious circle?

4.                What does the author suggest to do for homeless people?

**Text №12**

The first time we met, I was an innocent eight-year-old. My friends and I secretly took you down to our dark cellar, so that our parents would not find out. Later on, when I was about ten-year-old, we started to meet every weekend when my friends and I went to the noisy discotheque at our local youth club. We used to sneak out from the club up into the shady woods, where my friends and I sat with make-up on our faces and garish nail polish on our nails feeling very adult and mature.

From thirteen onwards we met several times a day, and by then my mother allowed you to come into my room. She did not want to know you, having gone through so much to get rid of you. Naturally she was rather disappointed in me but what could she do? She kept hoping that I would «get my act together» but at this age I was unruly and rebellious and punishments and curfews did not work.

There is no doubt that you have been everything to me. You have been there when I needed a friend or when I was sad. You calmed me down when I was upset. In .other words, you have been one of my best friends.

Unlike others in similar situations, I did not associate with you because it was fashionable or I thought it was tough. However, I had seen you and your equals, together with beautiful, sophisticated women; women who ate at expensive restaurants and drank red wine by candlelight. My friends and I tried to imitate those women; we wanted to live in that kind of world.

The problem was I liked you too much. There was no going back. I was caught in your trap. My flat was almost ruined because of you. My skin became a washed out pale grey. Sometimes I felt like an old woman. How was I so blind, deaf and ignorant for all those years? Why couldn’t I let you go? I know the answer myself, it was because I did not care then, but I do now.

In spite of it being difficult, I am now trying to end our destructive relationship, as one must end all bad relationships. I hope I will succeed in my effort to stop smoking and that I will never buy another packet of Prince again. After more than eighteen years together I bid you farewell, my fair Prince.

1.                What role did smoking play in the narrator’s life?

2.                 When did the girl take a cigarette first time?

3.                What did the girl think about cigarettes?

4.                 How long does the girl smoke?

**Text №13**

She was in the house of a married friend, sitting on the verandah, with a lighted room behind her. She was alone; and heard people talking in low voices, and caught her own name. She rose to go inside and declare herself: it was typical of her. Then she sank down again, and waited for a suitable moment to pretend she had just come in from the garden. This was the conversation she listened to, while her face burned and her hands went clammy.1

“She’s not fifteen any longer: it is ridiculous! Someone should tell her about her clothes”.

“How old is she?”

“Must be well over thirty. She was working long before I began working, and that was a good twelve years ago”.

“Why doesn’t she marry? She must have had plenty of chances”.

There was a dry chuckle. “I don’t think so. My husband was keen on her himself once, but he thinks she will never marry. Something  missing  somewhere”.

“Oh, I don’t know”.

“The other day I caught sight of her in the street and hardly recognized her. It’s a fact! The way she plays all those games, her skin is like sandpaper, 2 and she’s got so thin”.

“But she’s such a nice girl. She’d make someone a good wife”.

“She should marry someone years older than herself. A man of fifty would suit her… you’ll see, she will marry someone old enough to be her father one of those days”.

She was stunned and outraged; 3 but most of all deeply wounded that her friends could discuss her thus. And the things they had said! She tried to compose herself4 and went back into the room to join her treacherous friends, who greeted her as cordially as if they had not just that moment driven knives into her heart and thrown her quite off balance; she could not recognize herself in the picture they had made of her!

**1** **clammy**—влажный

**2** **sand paper**— наждачная бумага

**3** **outraged**—оскорбленный

**4** **to compose oneself**—успокоиться

1.                Where was Mary that night?

2.                How old was Mary?

3.                What did her friends do when she came back into the room?

4.                What didn’t Mary’s friends like in her appearance?

5.                What didn’t Mary’s friends like in her appearance?

**Text №14**

 Annie Stewart has been a keeper at Woburn Animal Kingdom for the past twelve years, and for eight years before that she worked at another safari park. It’s hard physical work, out in all weathers — animals have to be fed and looked after every day of the year.

“My working day normally begins at 8 a.m., but if an animal is sick I may have to be up all night with it. Week-ends and bank holidays are our busiest times while we’re open to visitors between March and October. I begin by loading feeds onto my car, then I drive to the eland (a type of larger antelope). I feed and check them. Then I go through a similar process with the giraffe and the hippo.

We always have to take special care in our dealings with the rhino — remember that they are dangerous wild animals. They have to be watched all the time in case something upsets them. And the eland can be especially unpredictable1 when the strangers are around. They only trust two of us to go near them, so if there are any problems with them on my day off I might easily be called in.

During the season when we’re open to the public, it’s part of the keepers’ job to patrol the park watching the public as much as the animals. People can be amazingly silly, ignoring signs and warnings. They seem to have no idea of the possible danger. Some get out of their cars to take photographs when they are frighteningly close to an animal that could kill them in an instant. We have to try and be diplomatic and maintain a sense of humor.

I get to know all the animals in my care individually. I fill in a daily diary and a weekly report, making a note of any changes of behavior.

This is a job that requires dedication and hard work. I was first attracted to it when I saw a documentary about this place 20 years ago. I had experience of looking after dogs in boarding kennels2, and I was fascinated by the safari park concept. So I wrote to them and was lucky enough to get a job, learning as I went along. It’s like a wild animal farm here -the animals have plenty of freedom and I enjoy the independence and responsibility which are central to my job”.

**1** **unpredictable**—непредсказуемый

**2** **kennels** — псарня

1.  How many years does Annie Stewart work as a keeper at Woburn Animal      Kingdom?

2.  What things about Annie’s job are the most important for her?

3.  What animals can be dangerous in a safari park?

4. Why do people need watching as much as the animals?

**Text №15**

Elaine and Roy Full wood had no intention of educating their children themselves until things went badly wrong at school. When a new head teacher with what Roy describes as «trendy educational methods» took over at the local school, the work of their eldest child, Alex, suffered and she became bored and aimless.

Despite a meeting with the head teacher, the Deputy Director of Education and other concerned parents nothing changed. At this point Elaine and Roy decided to take Alex, aged 8, and Anna, aged 6, away from school.

A year later Elaine was concerned about whether the girls were making enough progress. “For advice, we took the girls’ work to the heads of the schools where they would have been pupils. In both cases they were well ahead for their age. This reassured us that we were on the right way”.

Alex and Anna have now been at home for two years and are joined in their morning studies by six-year-old sister Miriam, who has never been to school. Four-year-old John occasionally joins in and 14-month-old Luke is often crawling nearby.

Having no teacher-training, it was necessary to plan work very carefully in the early days but now Elaine finds that it’s become second nature.

Roy trained as a teacher but has never actually taught. Now he spends as much time with the family as his job allows.

Roy and Elaine make it quite clear that being at home is not a soft option1. They put a lot of emphasis on responsibility and self-discipline. For example, Alex and Anna are in charge of the animals — hens, a horse and a goat — which they have to feed and clean out in all weathers. No one stands over them but they know that if they shirk their responsibilities2 then the animals will go. The children themselves will decide whether they want to do «O» and «A» levels. Roy and Elaine certainly won’t try to influence them.

The Full woods are clearly a close-knit family but they also have many friends. Although the children may never go to school again there is no anti-school feeling in the home. “The door’s open. If ever they want to go they can”.

**1** **soft option**—легкий выбор

**to shirk responsibilities** — уклоняться от выполнения обязанностей

1.  How many children are there in a family?

2.   At what moment did things go wrong at school?

3.   What do Royand Elaine put a lot of emphasis on in the upbringing of  their children?

4.  What do Roy and Elaine teach their children first of all?

**Text №16**

If you are thinking of buying a dog you must also be ready to devote a good deal of time to training the dog when it is young and giving it the exercise it needs throughout its life, unless you live in the country and can let it run freely. Dogs are demanding pets. Whereas cats identify with a house and are content if their place there is secure, a dog identifies with its master and consequently wants him to show proof of his affection.

The best time to buy a puppy is when it is between six and eight weeks old so that it can transfer its affection for its mother to its master. If puppies have not established a relationship with a human being until they are over three months old, their strongest relationship will always be with dogs; if they are kept in kennels’ for this length of time, they are likely to be too shy when they are brought out into the world to become good pets.

Different breeds2 require different training methods. German shepherd dogs, for example, respond favorably to mild punishment but terriers usually resent it and become more aggressive. The best way to train a dog is by reward, not punishment, but the reward must be immediate so that the dog connects it with what it has done. In general it is better to teach a dog by preventing it from doing things than by punishing it afterwards.

Pet food is a profitable business and there are firms concerned to make you believe that your dog will suffer if you do not buy it some special biscuit. In fact, dogs require a well-balanced diet, like human beings, except that they do not need fruit and vegetables because their bodies produce their own vitamin C.

In the same way beauty parlours3 for dogs would like you to think that it will be unhappy if it does not have its nails cut or its hair combed. Some dogs may benefit, but the essential point to remember is that you should take it regularly to a vet to ensure that it is healthy. In that case you should have a faithful companion for ten years or more.

**1kennels** — псарня

**2breed**—порода

**beauty parlor**—косметический салон

1. What is the most essential rule that you have to observe if you want to have a happy and healthy dog?

2.  Why do they recommend buying puppies when they are 6 or 8 weeks old?

3.   What is the best way to train a dog?

4. What happens if puppies don’t establish a relationship with a human being till they are three months old?

**Text №17**

 A visitor fromBarcelonaarrives atMadridgovernment office in mid-afternoon, and is surprised to find only the cleaning lady there. “Don’t they work in the afternoons?” he asks. “No,” she replies, “they don’t work in the mornings. In the afternoons they don’t come”.

Lazy Madrid, busy Barcelona: it is just one of many stereotypes about Spain’s great rivals. Mostly, the stereotypes are born of Barcelona’s bitterness at its second-class status. Barcelona is the capital of Catalonia, a proudly autonomous region, but Madrid is the capital of Spain. This causes resentment. It makes Barcelona the largest city in Western Europe not to be a national capital.

Over the years governments in Madrid did their best to limit Barcelona’s political power. Barcelona has the liberalism that often characterizes port cities. An old-fashioned seriousness in Madrid, isolated high up onSpain’s central plateaus, contrasts with the light-heartedness of Barcelona, open to Europe.

These old caricatures still hold true. No visitor to government buildings in the two cities can fail to be struck by the contrast between them. In Madrid, there are ancient wooden floors, antique furniture and walls covered with paintings by Spanish old masters. In Barcelona, designer chairs and tables are evidence of the place’s obsession with modernism.

And yet, these days, the similarities between the two cities are as striking as the contrasts. Madrid is hardly lazy any more. Nor is it old-fashioned. Indeed, it has become almost outrageously modern. To judge by the local cuisine1, you would think the place was a port: although far from the sea, seafood is a miraculous Madrid speciality.

As banks and businesses have been drawn to Madrid, it has become as much a commercial and industrial centre as an administrative one. Barcelona, meanwhile, has been experiencing a rise in bureaucracy.

The rivalry between Madrid and Barcelona is bound to remain fierce, not least on the soccer field, when Real Madrid and Barcelona compete for Spanish supremacy.

**‘ cuisine**—кухня

1. What was the policy of Madrid towards Barcelona for many years?

2. Which of the two rivals has traditionally been more oriented towards Europe?

3.  Why can one think,  judging by the local cuisine, that Madrid is a port?

4.  The rivalry between Madrid and Barcelona is fierce not only on the soccer field, isn’t it?

**Text №18**

What is a hero? This is not an easy question to answer. When we look closely at the life stories of many popular heroes, we find that they are not always very good or very likeable people. They have become heroes because of their actions, not because of their characters. People may be famous while they are alive, but after they are dead, stories are told and songs are written which make them into heroes.

The British hero who still remains larger than life is, of course, Robin Hood. Historians tell us that little — if any — of his story is true, but people love the idea of an outlaw1 who stole from the rich to give to the poor and they continue to believe it. In 1991, the Robin Hood Festival attracted 100,000 tourists to Sherwood Forest. They wanted to see Robin’s favourite hiding-place, the «Major Oak» — a tree which was planted a couple of hundred years after the hero’s death. They crowded into St. Mary’s Church, where Robin married Maid Marian — a marriage between a fourteenth-century hero and a woman who was added to the story two hundred years later (in a church which was completely rebuilt four hundred years later). They queued to get into *The Tales of Robin Hood,* an exhibition about the life of the outlaw who, according to the *Dictionary of National Biography,* never existed.

Villains2, like heroes, are the subjects of stories and songs which often have little to do with historical facts. Just as heroes they are always stronger, braver and more heroic than they are in real life, villains are always more wicked, more cruel and more villainous. For example, there are stories about Blackbeard the Pirate which tell us that he acted with great cruelty to his own men when he was drunk and could cut a man in two with one blow of his sword. In fact, Blackbeard probably encouraged these stories to make himself more frightening to the captains and crews of the ships he attacked. There are just as many stories which say that he avoided battles and showed some kindness to his enemies, but we like our villains to be black-hearted and that is the way we remember him.

**1** **outlaw**—лицо, объявленное вне закона

**2** **villain**—злодей

1. What do we find out when we look closely at the life stories of many popular heroes?

2.  Why is Robin Hood people’s favourite hero?

3.  When was «Major Oak», Robin’s favourite hiding place, planted?

4. Why did Blackbeard encourage stories about his cruelty and wickedness?

**Text №19**

Nine months ago Victor and Sally Wilkings withdrew1 their two elder children from a small country school which, Sally says, “had nice teachers and a friendly atmosphere”. It was not this particular school but a belief that all schools have a damaging effect that prompted the withdrawal of Seth, aged nine, and Esther, aged six and a half.

Sally feels that schools rob children of the personal responsibility for use of their own time. She also thinks that children are exposed2 to conflicting opinions and examples which confuse3 them. The influence of television also worries her.

A typical education-at-home day begins with a few domestic chores. These done, Seth and Esther settle down at the table in their cosy kitchen. The children usually choose what they do, select three or four subjects from a list which includes story-writing, reading, maths games and puzzles, science, history and music. The children keep a daily diary of their work and Sally corrects the balance if on occasions she feels something is being neglected. She also encourages them to finish whatever they begin. After a couple of hours it’s time for refreshments and a story. The afternoons when Victor is sometimes free to join them, are usually spent out of doors — gardening, or enjoying an outing or nature walk. During the evenings and at week-ends the children often attend local clubs.

Victor admits that he was a bit uneasy about home education when Sally first talked about it. «I suppose I thought that other people might think we were being irresponsible. In fact it’s quite the opposite. I was also worried that it would be too much for Sally to take on. What made the decision easier for me was going to a conference organised by Education Otherwise and finding that even academics were disillusioned with the school system. After that we decided to give it a year’s trial. Now that I see how happy the children are I wouldn’t dream of sending them back to school».

**1** **withdraw**—забирать

**2** **to be exposed to**—быть не защищенным от

**3** **to confuse**—запутывать

1.  What does a typical education-at-home day begin with?

2.  Who recommends the children which subjects from the list they should select?

3. Why was Victor uneasy about home education at first?

4.   How do the children spend afternoons?

**Text № 20**

Bert Rogers has two sons. His younger son, Howard, is an artist; he is married and has two small daughters.

BERT: “I missed out on quite a big part of Howard’s childhood. When he was little I was working very long hours. I had to be content with seeing my children at week-ends”.

“From an early age he was always working with paints and pencils. He had a natural talent for it—all I needed to do was guide and encourage him. We used to draw together because I, too, had always enjoyed painting and drawing.

“By the time he was 13, Howard had made up his mind that he wanted to be an artist. I would have preferred him to have followed a more academic career, but he left school at 16 and went to art  college; I was disappointed, but I had no choice but to support him and try to take pride in his achievements.

“Even now, we still argue. Howard is impulsive and volatile1; temperamentally, he’s far more like his mother than he is like me. He has quite strong left-wing views and we often clash. When we’re arguing he gets quite emotional, but I respect him for his views, even though I think he’s often wrong.

“As an artist and a man who’s expressing himself, he’s on top of things. In a way, I envy him because he was able to do what he wanted to do. I’d hoped to train as an engraver2, but my father wouldn’t support my apprenticeship3.1 suppose because my own talent was wasted I made a point of encouraging Howard’s, and I think it has been well worthwhile».

HOWARD: “My childhood memories of my father are pretty vague. He wasn’t a powerful presence because he wasn’t at home much. It’s only now that I’m a father myself that I can understand what sort of person he is. He’s kind and very understanding. I can talk to him more openly than I’ve ever done.

“Since my children were born, I’ve seen much more of Dad than I used to. I love to see the pleasure he gets from them. The children have bridged some of the gap between us.

“Despite all the difficulties we’ve had in the past, I do love my father very much, and I think it’s only quite recently that I’ve realised this”.

**1** **volatile**—непостоянный

**2** **engraver**—гравер

**3** **apprenticeship** — срок обучения

1.  Why was Bert disappointed when Howard went to art college?

2.  Why does Bert envy his son in a way?

3.  At what time in his life did Howard understand what sort of person his father is?

4.   What features of character does Howard value in his father?