

# Reading Comprehension

*Experienced readers*

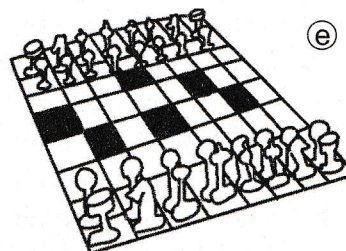
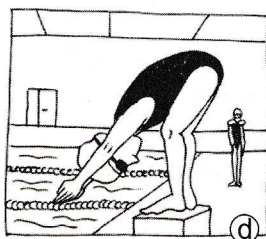
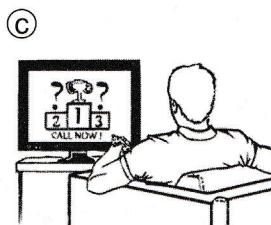
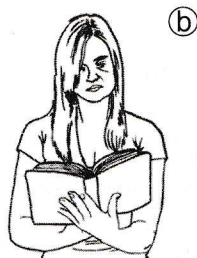
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**FUNCTIONS:**  
 Expressing preference  
 Inquiring about preference  
 Expressing points of view  
 Using informal language in personal letters  
**READING:** multiple choices, matching prompts to elements in the text  
**OBJECTIVES:** skimming the text, reading for gist

Match the picture with the appropriate paragraph:



1. What is it about this hobby that makes it so interesting? One of the reasons that so many people are keen on this hobby is because it is a way to involve the entire family. You can take your family and be away from the hustle and bustle of the city. You are to be at the lake, ponds or rivers away from the high technology that causes stress in life. You take time to prepare the rods, the lines and worms and in the end you just wait for the catch to come.
2. Every time you want to exercise your mind, just find a partner and start playing. A clear mind, strategy and patience are the main ingredients that help you win.
3. This year, summer temperatures have risen above average. In fact, they have exceeded so much that it is hard to face the heat without cooling down. And what is the best way than jumping into a pool, enjoying the cold water.
4. This is probably the most common hobby there is. People spend large amounts of hours with it each day. It is one of the most popular activities which, unfortunately, is neither constructive nor educational. For many people, their main pastime when coming home is to switch on their favourite broadcast or to browse the large number of channels.
5. It is one of the most constructive hobbies a person can have. It stimulates your mind, it makes you think and it unleashes your imagination. Thus, you discover new worlds and characters, magical realms and unbelievable creatures which are just at a book away.

**II** From the hobbies mentioned above, which one suits you the best and why? Express your preference in about 50 words:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**III** Read the text and choose the right variant:

“Leisure may be defined as the spare-time which a man gets after his bread and butter activities are over. It is the time which a man is free to pass in any way he likes. He has already his day's work. He has no longer to worry about the work by which he earns his living. Still he has sometimes left on his hand. That is leisure or spare time. A man gets more of leisure during holidays than in working day.

Modern life is a busy life. The pace of life gets faster and faster every day and a man must hurry and utilize every moment of his life, otherwise he would be left behind in the race of life. But some leisure is necessary for the happiness of life. There can be no happiness for a man, unless he gets some time to pass in the way he likes best.

One must have time for singing, dancing and pursuit of other fine arts, for all such pleasures and activities are an essential part of life. If a life lacks these elements, it would be really dull, dry and unhealthy. In short, life would not be worth-living without leisure.

But merely to have leisure is not enough. It is also essential that it should be rightly used. Many of us do not know how to put our spare time to right use and consequently we often hear people complaining that they feel tired during holidays and vacations. Such people misuse their leisure. They would either pass it in sleeping, playing cards, idle gossip, listening to the radio, or at the most in visiting the pictures. They are all passive activities – activities in which they do nothing and which do not at all require any use of their brains. Therefore, such people feel bored and instead of wishing for more of leisure, wish for less of it.

The spending of leisure rightly is an art, and a difficult art. It must be spent in activities which require some “doing”, some acting, some use of the brain. The correct way of passing leisure is to acquire culture, to make and contemplate beautiful things.

People may take to some hobby which would both entertain them and make them more cultured. For example, they may do painting or the study of standard works of literature, more specially poetry. Gardening is another of the finest uses of leisure.”

(excerpt from Aatish Palekar' article, on [www.publishyourarticles.net](http://www.publishyourarticles.net))

1. The article is about
  - A. having a hobby
  - B. making time for cultural activities
  - C. how to spend leisure time
  - D. modern life
2. The main idea of the text is
  - A. busy life makes people dull and bored
  - B. spending leisure time rightly
  - C. people do not know how to spend their leisure time
  - D. take up a hobby

3. What is the appropriate synonym for the word "leisure"

- A. free
- B. liberated
- C. unattached
- D. spare

4. To what does the phrase "these elements" refer to?

- A. Fine Arts
- B. leisure and happiness
- C. pleasures and activities
- D. holidays and vacations

**IV Tick the correct box:**

	True	False
1. A man is not free to pass his time after his day's work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Leisure is not necessary for any activity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Life would be dreary without spare-time activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Playing cards is an active pastime	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Leisure implies use of brain.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**V Match the words with their definitions:**

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| a) pace        | 1. time free from work or duties         |
| b) contemplate | 2. rate of movement;                     |
| c) leisure     | 3. a source of delight or joy            |
| d) gossip      | 4. meditate on                           |
| e) lack        | 5. rumor or report of an intimate nature |
| f) pleasure    | 6. the fact or state of being deficient  |

a	b	c	d	e	f

**VI Fill in the blanks. The first letter of the word has been given.**

1. She's got green fingers and **g**..... is her favourite pastime.
2. He is **r**..... ignorant when it comes to fine arts.
3. He works very hard in order to earn his bread and **b**..... for his family.
4. This matter **r**..... a well trained engineer.
5. After a long hard week I always like to **e**..... my friends and make them happy.
6. Life is not **w**..... without your dear ones.

3. What is the appropriate synonym for the word "leisure"

- A. free
- B. liberated
- C. unattached
- D. spare

4. To what does the phrase "these elements" refer to?

- A. Fine Arts
- B. leisure and happiness
- C. pleasures and activities
- D. holidays and vacations

**IV Tick the correct box:**

- 1. A man is not free to pass his time after his day's work.
- 2. Leisure is not necessary for any activity.
- 3. Life would be dreary without spare-time activities.
- 4. Playing cards is an active pastime
- 5. Leisure implies use of brain.

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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**V Match the words with their definitions:**

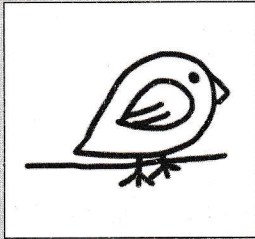
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|----------------|--|
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- 1. She's got green fingers and **g**..... is her favourite pastime.
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- 5. After a long hard week I always like to **e**..... my friends and make them happy.
- 6. Life is not **w**..... without your dear ones.

**Read the text below and choose the right answer:**



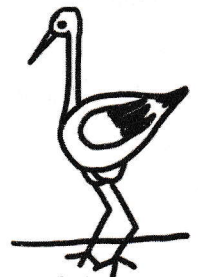
Why do birds sing? You might assume that birds sing because they are happy. While birds might be happy, they sing in order to communicate. One reason they sing is to stake a claim on territory. Birds sing to warn other birds to stay off their property. For example, a robin might stake a claim on a piece of land which measures about 200 feet wide by 200 feet long. This amount of land provides enough worms for the robin to feed its family.

A bird maintains singing perches around the outside edges of its territory. The perches are high in the trees, so other birds can see and hear it. Birds also sing to find a mate. The length and complexity of the mating song give information about the fitness of the bird. Healthy birds can sing longer, more complicated songs. Birds call to one another in shorter vocalizations in order to warn of danger and to locate one another.

Birds sing instinctively. Young birds learn to perfect their songs by listening to adult birds and interacting with other birds. Birds in a local area might learn variations in the basic song which help them recognize other members of their group.

([www.englishforeveryone.org](http://www.englishforeveryone.org))

1. Birds sing in order to
  - A. communicate
  - B. claim territory
  - C. find a mate
  - D. all of the above
2. Birds use vocalizations in order to
  - A. locate one another
  - B. be happy
  - C. establish territory
  - D. recognize other members of the group
3. Young birds perfect their songs
  - A. by singing instinctively
  - B. by interacting with other birds
  - C. by singing constantly
  - D. by learning variations in the basic song
4. The perches are high in the trees so
  - A. birds could call on one another
  - B. other birds could see and hear it
  - C. birds should protect their territory
  - D. birds could give information about their health
5. A perch is
  - A. bar or peg on which something is hung
  - B. a roost for a bird
  - C. a resting place or vantage point
  - D. all of the above
6. What does "fitness" of a bird refer to?
  - A. complicated songs
  - B. health
  - C. ability to locate one another
  - D. complex vocalizations



**II Fill in with the appropriate word: perch, claim, robin, assume, edge, property.**

1. The most well known bird in Britain is the .....
2. When he realized he was not among Sir Thomas's heirs he wanted to stake a ..... on the .....
3. As his car is not in front of the house I ..... he is still working.
4. The doves built their nest on the highest ..... of the tree.
5. He has gone bankrupt, but he still doesn't realize he's on the .....

**III Express your point of view on the text above in about 50 words:**

Phrases to express your point of view: in my point of view, in my opinion, I really / strongly think that, I should say that, etc

**IV Recognize the characters. Read the texts quickly and match each text with one of the photographs.**



**A.** Stefani Joanne Angelina Germanotta, known by her stage name as Lady Gaga, is an American singer and songwriter. She came to prominence as a recording artist following the release of her debut album *The Fame* (2008), which was a critical and commercial success that topped charts around the world and included the international number-one singles "Just Dance" and "Poker Face."

**B.** An American singer, actor, and businessman, he achieved early fame when he appeared as a contestant on *Star Search*, and went on to star in the Disney Channel television series *The New Mickey Mouse Club*. In 2002, he released his debut solo album, *Justified*, which sold more than seven million copies worldwide. The album was a commercial success, spawning the hits "Cry Me a River" and "Rock Your Body". His first two albums made him one of the most commercially successful singers in the world.



**C.** Madonna, born Madonna Louise Ciccone, is an American singer, songwriter, actress, dancer and entrepreneur. She has sold more than 300 million records worldwide and is recognized as the world's top-selling female recording artist of all time by *Guinness World Records*.



Considered to be one of the "25 Most Powerful Women of the Past Century" by *Time* for being an influential figure in contemporary music, she is known for continuously reinventing both her music and image and for retaining a standard of autonomy within the recording industry. Critics have praised her diverse musical productions which have also served as a lightning rod for controversy.

(<http://en.wikipedia.org>)

**V Answer the questions:**

1. How many records has Madonna sold worldwide?
2. Where did Justin Timberlake star?
3. When did Lady Gaga release her debut album?
4. What album was a commercial success for Justin Timberlake?
5. Who is considered one of the most powerful women?
6. What does Madonna continuously reinvent?
7. When did Justin Timberlake achieve fame?
8. Whose number-one single is "Poker Face"?
9. What are the hits that promoted Justin Timberlake?
10. Who is an influential figure in the contemporary music?

**VI Discuss these questions.**

1. Are you familiar with the artists presented above?
2. Who is your favourite and why?
3. What do you think about the success they have acquired?
4. Which of the albums mentioned above is of interest to you? Why?
5. Can any of these people be considered a model? Extend.

**VII Complete these sentences using words from the text. The first letter of each word is given to help you.**

1. He likes to travel **w**..... .
2. Not only he is a successful business man, but he is also a well-known **e**..... .
3. Mary hopes that one of her albums will top the **c**..... one day.
4. After years of hard work, they finally came to **p**..... .
5. She made her **d**..... with the play Anna Karenina by Lev Tolstoy.
6. In spite of the great results he obtained, no **p**..... was given.

Read the texts and arrange the paragraphs in the right order. The first one has been done for you.

Read through the jumbled text to get an idea of what it is about. There will be words in the text, at the beginning and the end of each paragraph, which will help you put the paragraphs into the correct order. Look for cohesive words: pronouns (*he, they, etc.*), possessive adjectives (*his, her, etc.*), linkers (*although, nevertheless, etc.*)

A. Somehow soccer made its way to England by the 1300s. King Edward of England did not like the game; in fact, he passed laws banning it. King Henry IV and King Henry VII passed laws against soccer as well. Queen Elizabeth of England had people put in jail for a week for playing soccer, followed by religious penance, or payment for sin. The game was thought to take time away from military drills and archery. At that time, it was very important for young men to practice archery, and soccer competed with archery.

B. FIFA estimates that about forty million (40,000,000) women are currently playing football throughout the world. The FIFA "Big Count," a 2006 soccer census, estimates two hundred sixty five million (265,000,000) male and female soccer players worldwide and five million referees, for a total of two hundred seventy million (270,000,000) people - four percent of the world's population - actively engaged in soccer.

C. Despite the ban, soccer eventually became an accepted sport. It even became part of the school curriculum. In 1863, a meeting of eleven English soccer clubs and schools decided on the official rules of the game. This meeting was the beginning of "The Football Association". Soon, other countries formed football associations. By 1912, there were 21 countries affiliated with the *Federation Internationale de Football Association* (FIFA). Today FIFA has 208 member associations.

D. Soccer seems to have originated in Asia. The Japanese played a game similar to soccer in about 1000 B.C., and it is documented that the Japanese played the first real soccer game in the year 611 A.D. The Chinese played against Japan with a feather or hair-filled soccer ball as early as 50 B.C. The Greeks played a game called *episkyros*. It was similar to soccer. The Romans played a ball game called *Harpastum*.

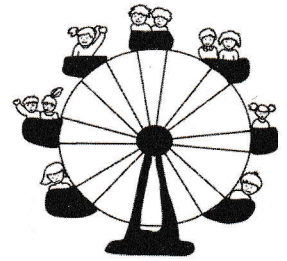
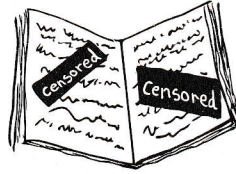
E. Before the 1970s, soccer was considered to be mostly a men's game. However, FIFA established the Women's World Cup in 1991. The first Women's World Cup tournament was played in the People's Republic of China in 1991. Twelve teams played for the championship. US women's college teams have also begun to receive varsity status, mostly because of the influence of Title IX, a new law which provides more money for schools that include women's sports.

F. However, laws, penance, and official censure did not stop the game of soccer. The game was very popular in the British Isles. It was played many different ways - sometimes it was played by kicking the ball, but often it was played by kicking members of the opposing team. Sometimes an entire village played against another village. The game was played through streets, fields, and streams. Over time, players agreed on general rules for the game. They also agreed on the size and weight of the soccer ball. Then another problem developed. During the 1600s, the Puritans in England took a particular dislike to soccer. This religious group thought that soccer was a "frivolous," or time-wasting entertainment. They also said that soccer disturbed the peace on Sunday, the Lord's Day. So, there was a new ban on Sunday soccer.

G. "The rules of soccer are very simple, basically it is this: if it moves, kick it. If it doesn't move, kick it until it does." (Phil Woosnam, 1974) Woosnam is a former soccer player and manager in Wales. He moved to the United States, where he was the coach of the American national team. He is now in the United States' National Soccer Hall of Fame. His quotation describes large variety of games that have been played for at least 3,000 years, finally resulting in the game of soccer. ([www.englishforeveryone.org](http://www.englishforeveryone.org))

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G						

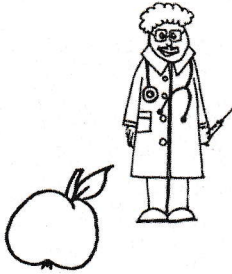
II For each picture, find in the text the corresponding word:



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

III Read the article again and explain the highlighted words. Use the highlighted words in sentences of your own.

IV Read the letter and find examples of informal style in Marc's letter. Then underline the topic sentences and replace them with your own topic sentences.

Writing a letter to a friend requires **informal style**:

- abbreviations (*I'm, I've got, etc*)
- basic linking words (*but, so, and, etc*)
- personal subjective tone (*I've got great news about, etc*)
- everyday expressions (*Thanks, You're great, It helps me a lot, etc*)

The letter begins with: **Dear...., My dear friend, etc**

The letter has to be divided into:

- Introduction (*one paragraph containing **introductory remarks** and the **reason** for writing the letter*)
- Main Body (*three to four paragraphs beginning with a **topic sentence** which introduces or summarises the paragraph*)
- Conclusion (*the last paragraph contains **closing remarks** – To sum up, In conclusion, In the end, etc*)

The letter is signed off using **Yours, Best wishes**, etc and the **first name** of the reader.

