

You are going to read an extract from a novel. For questions 31–36, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Night flight



The flight is busy and the last few passengers to board are searching for places to stow their hand luggage. The Asian woman in the seat next to me is in her late twenties, probably travelling on business. I am wondering if I should talk to her when the man in the window seat shows up and we have to let him in. She settles back in the middle seat. When I try to strap myself back in I find she's picked up the buckle of my belt by accident and we look at each other and laugh.

'What have you been doing in Bangalore?' I ask.

'My office is there. It's where I'm based.' I notice that she has a North American accent. She tells me she works for a multinational company that makes clothing and that she is on her way to Thailand. She has to visit a couple of factories and meet with some other people from the company. She's also trying to complete her PhD thesis, which is on a laptop she has under the seat in front of her. While she's talking she puts her passport away in her bag and I see she's Canadian.

She asks me what I do and I tell her. Then I ask her some more about her job and she tells me about that. By this time we are in the air and climbing towards our cruising altitude. The cabin is quiet, lights still dimmed, just the gentle sound of the air conditioning and the murmur of conversations. The flight to Singapore is three and a half hours. I can't decide whether to attempt sleep. It is nearly midnight and it hardly seems worth it. The man in the window seat has put on eye-shades and has an inflated pillow around his neck. He has slipped down in the seat with his head lolling to one side, his blanket pulled up to his chest. The woman shows no inclination to sleep so I ask her where she grew up.

She tells me her father is a medical doctor and that he went to Canada before she was born. They spent a few years in Montreal but most of the time she lived in Saskatchewan. 'It was OK,' she says. 'There are things happening there, it's not as dull as you might think.' She tells me sometimes in the winter it would get down to minus sixty.

'Really it was minus thirty,' she says. 'But the wind chill factor made it feel like minus sixty. I remember them saying on the weather forecast "human flesh will freeze in 1.4 seconds." Things like that.'

'I've never been anywhere that cold,' I say.

'Somehow it didn't feel that bad,' she says. 'It was like a dry cold. When the sun was shining it didn't seem that cold. It makes your skin kind of tingle. We used to play out in it. You can get seriously cold and not realise it. When you're back indoors your face and hands ache as the blood comes back. I suppose that is how polar explorers end up losing toes. They don't realise how cold they are.'

'I suppose so,' I say. There's a pause in the conversation and I wonder what to say next.

'I guess you get the other extreme living in India.'

'Bangalore is fine,' she says, 'though we need rain. The drought is very bad in south India right now.'

The woman asks me how I got into my present job and I tell her a bit about my life. At least I tell her the story which over time has fashioned itself into what I call my life. It's not that I'm being deliberately secretive or deceitful. I just don't know how to talk about what really happened.

- 31** What do we find out about the woman in the first paragraph?
- A** She is annoyed at having to change seats with another passenger.
 - B** She finds a mistake she makes amusing.
 - C** She wants to get on with her work during the flight.
 - D** She has difficulty finding room for items she brought on board.
- 32** What does the woman say at the beginning of the conversation?
- A** She has Canadian nationality.
 - B** She usually works in Thailand.
 - C** She is currently both studying and working.
 - D** She is going to work for a different employer.
- 33** Why does the writer stay awake throughout the flight?
- A** There is a lot of mechanical noise on the plane.
 - B** Nobody else on board seems to want to sleep.
 - C** Some of the passengers are talking loudly.
 - D** He would not be able to sleep very long.
- 34** The woman talks about temperatures in Canada to show that
- A** it could sometimes be extremely cold in Montreal.
 - B** India is a more pleasant country to live in than Canada.
 - C** the place where she grew up could be interesting.
 - D** in Saskatchewan children had to stay at home all winter.
- 35** What does 'that' refer to in line 52?
- A** failing to notice how cold some parts of the body really are
 - B** wearing clothes that do not cover the skin in very cold weather
 - C** playing games outside in extremely low temperatures
 - D** going into a warm place straight from somewhere much colder
- 36** The writer mentions the weather in India because
- A** he realises the woman wants to change the subject.
 - B** he wants to keep the conversation going.
 - C** he finds the weather an interesting topic to discuss.
 - D** he had wanted to ask the woman about it while she was talking.

You are going to read an article about returning to work after being away on holiday. Six sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A–G** the one which fits each gap (37–42). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Just because I've been on holiday doesn't mean I have to be happy

'Holiday hangover', 'back-to-work blues', 'post-travel depression' – it's a well-known condition, and I'm suffering from it.

My cat. My tortoise. My friends. My bed. The list reads the same every time, but I still write it. I write it on the last day of every holiday, to convince myself that going home isn't so bad. Then I feel utterly miserable. There are plenty of things I'm not great at – driving, maths, returning library books on time – but the thing I'm worst at is coming back to work after a holiday.

It's an extreme case of being selfishly miserable. To have had a lovely sunshine break and then return to the office, where everyone has been working hard without restaurant lunches or morning swims, with a face like thunder is terribly bad manners. **37** Given the number of names for it – 'holiday hangover', 'back-to-work blues', 'post-travel depression' – it's a well-known condition.

In a recent survey conducted by a travel website, 82 per cent of the 1,254 people asked experienced post-holiday misery. **38** Probably just before they logged on to a job vacancy website or started fantasising about retraining for work in the countryside.

Even if you manage to avoid end-of-holiday panic, and you feel refreshed, relaxed and ready to face the world of work, you're guaranteed to walk into stress, conflict and injustice. **39** Or the surprise departmental reorganisation that took place while you were away.

Still, it could be worse. Over three-quarters of people questioned said that their holiday depression lasted for a

month. **40** Perhaps they should have saved their cash and not bothered going.

After years of practice, I've come up with a few things that help. A bit. The first is the list mentioned above. **41** Unlike some people I know, I can't just roll off an intercontinental flight and roll in to the office. The third is concentrating on getting through the first day back at work without running away, making a grand plan for a new life or spending (too much) time on my own tearfully looking at my holiday photos saying to myself: 'I can't believe this is my life.'

I feel sorry for my poor colleagues having to look at my long face today, but at least by having my break now I'm getting my bad mood in early. **42** Then I can support them in their hour (month?) of need. I might even lend them one of my pets.



- A** By September, on the other hand, when the schools go back and the main summer-holiday season is over, I'll be back to normal.
- B** The most content, with both their home and working life, appear to be those who stay at home all summer.
- C** For instance, that highly important task you left with a colleague that's been ignored and later caused your email inbox to turn toxic.
- D** At least, though, I'm not the only fed-up wage slave to feel like this.
- E** The next one is making sure I have a day off everything between getting home and going to work.
- F** Also, over two-thirds of them answered the next question, 'Are you usually glad to be home after a holiday abroad?' with a – presumably unhappy-sounding – 'No'.
- G** Longer by at least a fortnight, I'd guess, than the holiday they'd taken.

You are going to read a newspaper article about an Olympic athlete. For questions **43–52**, choose from the paragraphs (**A–D**). The paragraphs may be chosen more than once.

Which paragraph

- gives an example of Jessica having good luck? **43**
- refers to the role of Jessica's family in helping her achieve success? **44**
- suggests it is surprising that Jessica does not understand herself better? **45**
- mentions a previous sporting disappointment that Jessica had? **46**
- explains why Jessica is so popular with the local public? **47**
- explains why another athlete was surprised at Jessica's performance? **48**
- mentions a painful childhood memory? **49**
- suggests that Jessica's appearance can give a misleading impression? **50**
- says that Jessica's relationship with someone can sometimes be difficult? **51**
- contrasts Jessica's personality on and off the track? **52**



Jessica Ennis: heptathlon Olympic champion



A There have been many great Olympic athletes in recent years, but few have been taken to their country's heart quite as warmly as gold medal winner Jessica Ennis. Her quiet determination to succeed, her good humour when faced by setbacks and the absolute joy she showed when finally becoming Olympic champion have all contributed to this, as has the difficulty of the sport she has chosen to compete in: the heptathlon. This involves turning in world-class performances in seven track and field events over two days. At first sight, Jessica – at just 1.65 metres and 57 kilos – may seem an unlikely winner of such a physically demanding sport, but once the action begins it soon becomes clear she has the speed, strength and endurance to beat anyone.



B Jessica recognises that her normally easygoing nature is transformed into something much fiercer when she has to compete. She knows that success only comes from being highly motivated and totally focused on each event. In her autobiography *Unbelievable*, she talks of the way she was picked on at school by bigger girls because of her background and lack of size, and how that has made her determined to succeed, particularly against taller and stronger athletes. She also points out that she is not from a particularly sporting family and that her sister 'absolutely hates sport', but says she was introduced to athletics by her parents, who have continued to give her encouragement and support throughout her career as an athlete. Her mother was born in the UK and her father in Jamaica.

C She gets on well with her family, as she does with her husband Andy, saying she dislikes conflict and wherever possible avoids arguments with people. The only exception is her trainer Chell, with whom she has a row 'every day'. And although Jessica is a psychology graduate, she is unable to explain how she acquired the tremendous self-discipline that has enabled her to keep training to Olympic gold medal standard while so many others have given up along the way. Of course, at that level nothing can be taken for granted, as she discovered when a sudden injury put her out of the Beijing Games. She describes that as the lowest point in her career. Typically, though, Jessica bounced back, and once fit again began training just as hard as ever.

D By the time of the London Games in 2012 she was in the best shape of her life, and on this occasion she was fortunate enough to remain free of injury. Some of the times she recorded in the heptathlon were so fast that she would have achieved good positions in the finals of track events such as the 200 metres. That brought to mind a race won two years earlier against the world champion, who couldn't believe she had lost to someone who trained for seven different events. Since the London Olympics, Jessica has continued to take part in competitions, receiving numerous awards including World Sportswoman of the Year. She has also featured on a special postage stamp and has had a post box in her home city of Sheffield painted gold in her honour.