

Part 1

Read the film review and the questions below. For each question, choose A, B, C or D.

Boyhood

Boyhood is an astonishing film from director Richard Linklater, starring Ellor Coltrane, Patricia Arquette, Lorelei Linklater and Ethan Hawke. The film is about the life of a boy, Mason, growing up in Texas, starting from when he was six years old and finishing when he was 18. What makes it absolutely unique is that it was filmed in real time, using the same actors. The fact that we really do see Mason grow up is a ground-breaking achievement in the film world.

Boyhood was filmed for a few days every year over a 12-year period. When filming began, the director only had an outline script, some plot ideas and the ending. Each year, he reviewed what had been filmed so far before writing the script for that year. The main actors were allowed to contribute to the script by sharing real-life experiences they'd had that had changed them. Although it sounds chaotic, it works remarkably well.

There is no plot in traditional terms, just a series of snapshot moments from people's lives – growing up is the story. We follow the lives of Mason, his sister and his parents through some of their happiest and most difficult moments. The scene that really sticks in my mind is the when Mason gets his first girlfriend. Linklater really captures the magic of that experience.

If there was one thing that was slightly disappointing about the film, it was the soundtrack. There were some good songs in there but the selection could have included some more iconic songs for each of the years included in the film.

Perhaps Linklater's real achievement is that while you are watching the film, you feel as if you are growing up with the characters. It's also impossible not to revisit your own childhood memories.

Boyhood fully deserved all the awards it won. If you get the opportunity to see it, you won't regret it.

Lisa Jones



- 1 How does the writer feel about the film?
 - A She is very impressed by the film.
 - B She regards it as interesting but not exceptional.
 - C She thinks it is nothing out of the ordinary.
 - D She believes it is a typical film about growing up.
- 2 What does the writer say about the process of making the film?
 - A It was too chaotic to be completely successful.
 - B The actors were not involved in it at all.
 - C The whole script was finalised before filming began.
 - D The director also wrote the script.
- 3 According to the writer,
 - A the most memorable scene is when Mason has his first relationship.
 - B the film only shows the best moments in the family's lives.
 - C the plot is quite typical of films about growing up.
 - D the director fails to show how wonderful love is.

- 4 What is the writer's opinion of the soundtrack?
A It was absolutely awful.
B It wasn't quite as good as it could have been.
C It couldn't have been better.
D It included some really wonderful songs.
- 5 The writer
A wishes she hadn't seen the film.
B doesn't understand why the film won so many awards.
C advises people not to go to see the film.
D recommends seeing the film.

Part 2

Read the article. Five sentences have been removed from it. Choose from sentences A–F to fill each gap (6–10). There is one extra sentence you don't need to use.

Learning languages

Some people seem to pick up languages effortlessly while the rest of us struggle to get by in one foreign language. They're just born with a language-learning gene, right? Wrong! Anyone can learn a language.

One of the biggest mistakes people make is not understanding that all languages have a core vocabulary. **(6)** _____. That means, if you learn these words you could quickly get a basic understanding. You can learn them using one of the many apps available which help you to memorize new vocabulary.

Find out about cognates, too. They're words that look and mean the same as words in other languages, for example *education* in English and *la educación* in Spanish. **(7)** _____. You can do a quick search online to find lists of cognates.

As soon as you can, you should start using what you know, even if it's just a few simple words and phrases. No matter how much you learn, you'll never improve if you don't start speaking! **(8)** _____. Children all make mistakes when they're learning their first language, so you should expect to with a new language.

Living in or visiting the country whose language you want to learn might be ideal, but it's not always possible. **(9)** _____. Modern technology means you can listen to the radio and watch TV programmes online from countries all over the world. If you like music, then you can also listen to and sing songs in your target language. **(10)** _____. You can get these for as little as five dollars an hour, so you don't have to spend a fortune.

- A** Not being able to travel to the country is no excuse nowadays.
B Setting aside some time every day to study the language and setting learning goals is useful too.
C For example, in English around 300 words make up 65% of all written material.
D There are a surprising number of them even in languages that are very different from English.
E Even better than that, is to organise classes by Skype with a native speaker.
F Don't worry about making mistakes, they are part of the learning process.