

1

Reading Comprehension

Section A

Section B

Section C

Exercise 1

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY ➤

CEFR : B1

You are going to read a magazine article about smells. For questions 1–6, choose the answer (A, B or C) which you think fits best according to the text. There is an example at the beginning (0).

As this exercise is at easy level, we have provided you with only three different answers to choose from.

EXAMPLE

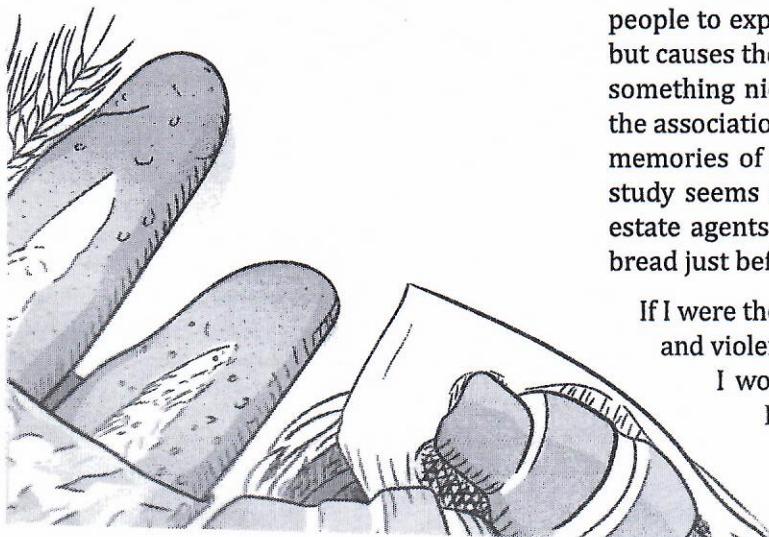
0 The title of the article suggests

- (A) an article about the positive effects of pleasant smells on people.
- (B) an article about new bakery products.
- (C) an article about the best recipes to become happier.

ANSWER A

THE SMELL OF BREAD BAKING MAKES US KINDER

What smells evoke the most positive emotions for you? For most of the world, one smell stands out as the clear favourite – the smell of fresh bread baking. Scientists have long known of the power of certain scents – baking bread, vanilla, flowers – to evoke powerful emotions and memories in human beings, but until now these reactions were pretty much subjective experiences.



Researchers concluded that there was something about the effect of the smell of bread baking that was not just subjectively pleasant, but that triggered more positive, helpful, kinder, and more altruistic behaviour in people. In general, people become more generous in areas where pleasant ambient smells are spread.

Fragrances and their effects on the human brain have been studied by scientists for some time, so something is known about their effect on the brain. Our olfactory receptors are most directly connected to areas of the brain called the 'limbic system', which are linked with emotion. Furthermore, smells are linked with the formation of and retention of memories. As Russian author Vladimir Nabokov once said, "Nothing revives the past so completely as a smell that was once associated with it".

So the smell of bread baking not only causes most people to experience positive emotions in response to it, but causes them to act on those positive emotions and do something nice for a stranger. Perhaps it's memory, and the association of the smell of bread baking with pleasant memories of it in childhood. Whatever it is, this French study seems to support the common saying among real estate agents that "if you want to sell your house, bake bread just before potential buyers come to visit it".

If I were the mayor of a city and wanted to reduce crime and violence and make it a more pleasant place to live,

I would promote the opening of more bakeries.

It would be a better solution than using the police. It might not solve all the problems, but at the very least it would be a more pleasant place to walk around in.

1 **What are the most powerful scents according to scientists?**

- A Garlic bread, vanilla, and flowers.
- B Baking bread, vanilla, and flowers.
- C Chocolate, vanilla, and flowers.

2 **What effects can the smell of baking bread have on people?**

- A People become hungrier.
- B People become more helpful.
- C People become more nervous.

3 **In paragraph 3, the writer states that**

- A smells don't have any effects on the brain.
- B it's difficult to spread smells.
- C smells are linked with memories.

4 **The quote by the Russian author Nabokov means that**

- A a good smell can make you forget a bad experience.
- B memory is not related to a specific odour.
- C smells help us to remember past events.

5 **What encourages people to behave in a gentle way?**

- A Baked bread's aroma.
- B The flavour of bread.
- C The shape of bread.

6 **How would the writer reduce the levels of crime in a city?**

- A By encouraging the opening of more baker's shops.
- B By convincing people to move to a more pleasant area.
- C By increasing the number of policemen in the streets.

Reading Comprehension

Exercise 2

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY ➤

CEFR: B1

You are going to read an extract from a magazine article. Five paragraphs have been removed from the extract. Choose from paragraphs A–G the one which fits each gap (1–5). There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use. There is an example at the beginning (0).

As this exercise is at easy level, to help you find the correct answers we have provided you with only one extra paragraph.

STARS



Stars are cosmic energy engines that produce heat, light, ultraviolet rays, x-rays, and other forms of radiation. They are composed largely of gas and plasma, a superheated state of matter composed of subatomic particles. Though the most familiar star, our own sun, stands alone, about three of every four stars exist as part of a binary system containing two mutually orbiting stars. **0** **C**

Yet on a clear, dark night Earth's sky reveals only about 3,000 stars to the naked eye. Humans of many cultures have charted the heavens by these stars.

Some stars have always stood out from the rest. Their brightness is a factor of how much energy they put out – known as luminosity – and how far away from Earth they are. **1** **■**

Stars may occur in many sizes, which are classified in a range from dwarfs to 'supergiants'. Supergiants may have radii a thousand times larger than that of our own sun.

Hydrogen is the primary building block of stars. **2** **■**

As they get smaller, the clouds spin faster because of the conservation of angular momentum – the same principle that causes a spinning skater to speed up when she pulls in her arms.

Building pressures cause rising temperatures inside such a nascent star, and nuclear fusion begins when a developing young star's core temperature climbs to about 27 million degrees Fahrenheit (15 million degrees Celsius). **3** **■**

Main sequence stars like our own sun exist in a state of nuclear fusion during which they will emit energy for billions of years by converting hydrogen to helium.

Stars evolve over billions of years. **4** **■**

As stars move toward the end of their lives much of their hydrogen has been converted to helium. Helium sinks to the star's core and raises the star's temperature – causing its outer shell to expand. These large, swelling stars are known as 'red giants'. The red giant phase is actually a prelude to a star shedding its outer layers and becoming a small, dense body called a 'white dwarf'. **5** **■**

- A Young stars at this stage are called 'protostars'. As they develop, they accumulate mass from the clouds around them and grow into what are known as main-sequence stars.
- B When their main-sequence phase ends they pass through other states of existence according to their size and other characteristics. The larger a star's mass, the shorter its lifespan will be.
- C No one knows how many stars exist, but the number would be staggering. Our universe likely contains more than 100 billion galaxies, and each of those galaxies may have more than 100 billion stars.
- D White dwarfs cool for billions of years, until they eventually go dark and produce no energy. At this point, which scientists have yet to observe, such stars become known as black dwarfs.
- E The gas circles through space in cosmic dust clouds called 'nebulae'. In time, gravity causes these clouds to condense and collapse in on themselves.
- F At some point, the temperature gets so extremely high at the centre, it triggers a fusion reaction. All the material that has fallen in then evolves into a hot, bright star.
- G Stars in the heavens may also appear to be different colours because their temperatures are not all the same. Hot stars are white or blue, whereas cooler stars appear to have orange or red hues.

Reading Comprehension

Exercise 2

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY ➤

CEFR: B1

You are going to read three different opinions from doctors about the advantages of swimming. questions 1–7, choose from the writers (A–C). The writers may be chosen more than once. There example at the beginning (0).

As this exercise is at easy level, we have provided you with only three different opinions to choose from.

WHICH DOCTOR



- 0 A highlights that swimming is a great way to keep fit?
- 1 B explains why swimming is beneficial for pregnant woman?
- 2 C defines swimming as a lifetime fitness and lifesaving skill?
- 3 D underlines that swimming can help reduce stress and depression?
- 4 E says that swimming is an extremely low impact activity compared to other sports?
- 5 F outlines that women who are having a baby sleep better after a swim?
- 6 G focuses on the possibility of losing some weight more easily?
- 7 H states that swimming promotes fitness and teaches motivation for physical achievement?

A Dr Stevens, Atlanta Hospital

Starting regular swimming can help reduce the risk of illnesses whilst also boosting your mood and keeping your weight under control! Swimming uses all the muscles in the body so whether you swim a gentle breaststroke or hammer butterfly, you will get a full body workout. Plus, exercising in water makes your body work harder so 30 minutes in a pool is worth 45 minutes of the same activity on land. Just 30 minutes of swimming three times a week alongside a balanced, healthy diet and lifestyle is one of the best ways to stay fit and healthy and maintain a positive mental outlook. Swimming regularly can lower stress levels, reduce anxiety and depression, and improve your sleep patterns. Feeling the mental benefits of swimming takes just a light swim. Swimming is one of the most effective ways to burn calories. A gentle swim can burn over 200 calories in just half an hour, more than double that of walking. And a faster swim would see that indulgent chocolate bar gone quicker than if you went running or cycling. So swimming is a brilliant way to stay active. Just 30 minutes of swimming three times per week can boost your energy levels through increased metabolic rate.

B Dr Mallory, New York University

Swimming truly is a form of fitness that is perfect for people of all ages. Children as young as 12 months old can begin learning to swim and be comfortable in the water, and adults as old as 100 still swim as a healthy lifetime activity. Swimming is truly a form of fitness that is perfect for people of all ages. Swimming can visibly and dramatically improve physical endurance and strength in a relatively short period of time when done regularly and increased cardiovascular endurance is extremely motivating for swimmers of all ages! Compared to other types of fitness routines, swimming is relatively injury-free compared to other sports. The water supports the body and provides a perfect amount of resistance to allow you to strengthen your muscles while still being able to flow comfortably through the water without an extreme amount of effort. Participation in formal swimming lessons is also associated with a reduction in the risk of drowning in small children. Swimming is a life saving skill that not only protects your own life, but may also offer you the chance to protect others.

C Dr Jameson, Chicago Mercy Hospital

A body of water provides multiples avenues for exercise. Swimming, walking, aerobics and resistance training are all examples of water routines that build strength and burn calories while providing women with an effective workout. Swimming is a full-body exercise that utilises, strengthens and tones major muscle groups within a woman's body. Since women are mostly buoyant while swimming, pregnant women may be more comfortable exercising in water than on land. Improvements in muscular strength and oxygen efficiency may ease the challenges of labour and will help a woman's lungs deliver oxygen effectively to her baby. Swimming may lower stress levels and anxiety experienced during pregnancy. The Baby Center reports that swimming may help women sleep better and empower women to deal with psychological and physical challenges associated with pregnancy. Research shows that women who exercise frequently during pregnancy will be more active, dynamic and healthier than those do not. The reason that many pregnant women choose swimming is that it is simple, and you do not feel heavy like other sports thanks to exercising in the water. Swimming makes you feel cool and you spend less energy than with other sports especially in the summer.