

1. You are going to read a magazine article in which the writer describes a Mediterranean cruise. For questions 1-6, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Cruising Round the Mediterranean

Janet Foster describes her holiday of a lifetime

“Wonderful weather, masses of interesting things to see and do, and superb comfort.” That was what I told the travel agent when she asked what kind of holiday I was looking for. “How about a Mediterranean cruise?” she said. And that’s how I found myself, two months later, aboard the cruise ship Venus.

- 5 From the moment I set foot on the ship, I felt pampered. The public areas were quite luxurious with their elegant furnishings and wood-panelled walls. They reminded me of some of the scenes from the film Titanic, and I half expected Leonardo de Caprio to appear at any moment.

- 10 On the first day, I explored the ship to get my bearings and to find out about on-board entertainment activities. I made a mental note of which ones to go for, and what to avoid. Most of the young people seemed to be hanging around the gym and virtual-reality centre. I visited both briefly, but quickly went back on deck. I spent hours basking beside the swimming pool, taking an occasional dip in the water for exercise, or joining one of the aerobics sessions.

- 15 And don’t think for a minute that taking a cruise by myself implied that I remained alone. Though men appeared to be in the minority, there were plenty of singles on board and no lack of company. In fact, I made several casual acquaintances and formed friendships with a couple of fascinating fellow passengers.

- 20 Some of the more experienced cruise passengers I met told me that cruise ships are famed for the quality of their cuisine, and the Venus was no exception. My favourites were the English afternoon teas with dainty sandwiches and fresh pastries. I can still hear the waitress, silver teapot in hand, asking, “Would you prefer milk or lemon, madam?”

There was a dazzling variety of evening activities. In my 10 days on board I ‘only’ managed two concerts, a Las Vegas-style cabaret, a magic show, a lecture on wines, a disco, and a 60s night of singing and dancing.

- 25 But the crowning glory of the cruise was undoubtedly the tours. The short stops we made at historic ports satisfied my craving for travel and perfectly suited my temperament. From a hilltop castle at Vigo in Spain, I enjoyed a panoramic view across the bay. In the quaint, narrow streets of Palma, Majorca, even souvenir shopping proved a pleasure. One place I would have been happy to spend longer than the one allotted day was the Adriatic port of Dubrovnic, with its marvellous old city walls.

- 30 Venice provided the grand finale before we returned to the UK. Sailing slowly along the canals in a gondola, peering at St. Mark’s Square through the misty early morning light was magical. I was pleased that I had forced myself to rise at the crack of dawn and see Venice, quiet, without the usual adoring crowds. I found the city as alluring as ever.

- 35 Other holidays that I’ve had were fun. Some were more restful, most considerably cheaper than a cruise, but none were in any way comparable. It’s going to take a year of scrimping and saving to pay off the cruise on the Venus but, for my idea of heaven, it was worth it.

1. **Why did the writer book a holiday on the *Venus*?**
 - A She had always dreamed of going on a cruise.
 - B It was the only cruise with places still available.
 - C It was the result of a suggestion made to her.
 - D She had been thinking about it for quite a long time.
2. **From her first impressions of the cruise ship, the writer felt that the ship owners**
 - A had had the vessel redecorated.
 - B had ordered an exact replica of another ship.
 - C understood the importance of atmosphere.
 - D were constantly looking for new staff.
3. **The writer uses the phrase ‘no lack of company’ (lines 27-28) to show that she**
 - A was used to being on her own.
 - B found lots of people to mix with.
 - C enjoyed meeting the male passengers.
 - D preferred her own company.
4. **What do we learn about the writer?**
 - A She always enjoys going out to shop for gifts.
 - B She had actually been to Venice before.
 - C She didn’t like the crowds one encounters on cruise ships.
 - D She liked to get up early in the morning.
5. **According to the writer, the ticket for the cruise**
 - A cost less than other holidays abroad.
 - B was unreasonably expensive.
 - C cost more than the writer had expected.
 - D has not yet been fully paid for.
6. **Which statement most closely expresses the writer’s conclusions about her trip?**
 - A The travel agent understood what I was looking for.
 - B I could have done with more shipboard activities and less sightseeing.
 - C It was not at all what I expected of a cruise.
 - D Many of the activities were unsuitable for older people.

2. You are going to read a newspaper article about a sporting event. For questions 1-10, choose from the participants (A-D). The participants may be chosen more than once.

Primal Quest

Are you adventurous? Sarah Cairns asked four participants about Discovery Channel's annual race.

A PAUL

"Testing yourself to the limit, challenging nature, racing and adventure" was how Paul described the exciting annual expedition race called Primal Quest. Paul had tried his hand at all the skills needed for the contest long before he actually took part in it. "I learned to ride horses and mountain bikes at an early age and when I was 16, Dad finally took me climbing. It still took me years to build up the necessary strength," he told us. "The race covers over 400 miles of extremely rough terrain, and includes rappelling and whitewater rafting. You need to keep going round the clock for anything between six to 10 days, and you're fighting exhaustion most of the time. This year the race was in the desert, and the extreme heat was especially brutal. But, I get a kick out of any sport that involves danger and calls for stamina and a lot of willpower. It's a challenge to human endurance."

B HELEN

Helen admitted that she wasn't always an asset to her team. "I'd done quite a bit of mountain biking before, but there were sections between checkpoints that we rode across which were interspersed with parts where the bikes had to be carried. That meant that, at each stage, we had to dismantle our bikes, and then reassemble them. I'm what you would call technically challenged, so I held the team back. My three teammates were great, though. Whoever was ready first always gave me a hand." Helen, experienced in the water, was happy that she was able to reciprocate in the kayaking part of the race, a skill in which her fellow teammates were less competent. She managed to save them quite a bit of time by choosing the fastest possible course through the river and helping them avoid underwater rocks. These are virtually invisible, but a skilled kayaker can recognise them by the slight changes in the river's flow.

C SANDY

It's difficult for Sandy to put her finger on what attracted her most about Primal Quest. "Maybe it was a love of extreme sports," she told me, "or growing up in a mountainous area in Canada where climbing and canoeing were always part of our lives." The beauty and splendour of the course, which took them through stunning desert canyons to unspoilt mountain trails, made her feel it was well worth it. Sarah also admitted that being a woman had something to do with it. "I loved the idea of a challenging race in a wild and remote location, where both sexes had to be represented on every team. I really believe that Primal Quest makes for better human beings, not just sportspeople. You need perfect communication with your teammates, mutual consideration and total dedication to the mission at hand. I think you come home from the experience a more compassionate person, at work, with your family and in other relationships."

D DAVID

Upon reaching Checkpoint 36, David and his teammates were informed that, before they could continue, they would have to complete an orienteering course. This was a route of eight and a half miles which they had to cover while finding points shown on a map, in territory that is especially difficult to navigate. They hadn't counted on this obstacle, and as it turned out, some other teams opted for an eight-hour penalty rather than attempting it. "However, one of the team had once been a scout and remembered orienteering to get us through this part in under five hours. On the seventh day, we were still well ahead," he told us. "Our performance was outstanding. We'd made good time on the mountain bike sections and there wasn't a flash flood in sight when we waded through a river bed." Then, on the eighth day, misfortune struck. Nell sprained an ankle so she couldn't ride her bike. "There was no way she could get to the finishing line, which meant we were all disqualified."

Which of the participants

had been confident of winning?

1	
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mentions qualities not necessarily connected to sport?

2	
---	--

refers to long training done before the race?

3	
---	--

contributed expert knowledge?

4	
---	--

mentions overcoming an unexpected setback?

5	
---	--

was able to return a favour?

6	
---	--

mentions the strict rules of the race?

7	
---	--

is aware of their own shortcomings?

8	
---	--

complains about the physical conditions?

9	
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feels the choice of venue is an important factor?

10	
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3. For questions 1-7, complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between two and five words, including the word given.

1. I've had quite enough of your rudeness. PUT

I will not rudeness.

2. There's no point in spending time on this exercise. OF

This exercise time.

3. It was such an expensive book that I didn't buy it. SO

If the book , I would have bought it.

4. I'd rather book tickets than wait in a queue. PREFER

I in a queue.

5. The paint on that house looks very new. MUST

That house very recently.

6. John likes more sugar in his tea. SWEET

This cup of tea for John.

7. Did you enjoy the party? GOOD

Did you at the party?