

PAPER 1 READING (1 hour)

Part 1

You are going to read a magazine article about an artist who paints flowers. For questions 1–8, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

An eye for detail

line 12 Artist Susan Shepherd is best known for her flower paintings, and the large garden that surrounds her house is the source of many of her subjects. It is full of her favourite flowers, most especially varieties of tulips and poppies. Some of the plants are unruly and seed themselves all over the garden. There is a harmony of colour, shape and structure in the two long flower borders that line the paved path which crosses the garden from east to west. Much of this is due to the previous owners who were keen gardeners, and who left plants that appealed to Susan. She also inherited the gardener, Danny. 'In fact, it was really his garden,' she says. 'We got on very well. At first he would say, "Oh, it's not worth it" to some of the things I wanted to put in, but when I said I wanted to paint them, he recognised what I had in mind.'

Susan prefers to focus on detailed studies of individual plants rather than on the garden as a whole, though she will occasionally paint a group of plants where they are. More usually, she picks them and then takes them up to her studio. 'I don't set the whole thing up at once,' she says. 'I take one flower out and paint it, which might take a few days, and then I bring in another one and build up the painting that way. Sometimes it takes a couple of years to finish.'

Her busiest time of year is spring and early summer, when the tulips are out, followed by the poppies. 'They all come out together, and you're so busy,' she says. But the gradual decaying process is also part of the fascination for her. With

tulips, for example, 'you bring them in and put them in water, then leave them for perhaps a day and they each form themselves into different shapes. They open out and are fantastic. When you first put them in a vase, you think they are boring, but they change all the time with twists and turns.'

Susan has always been interested in plants: 'I did botany at school and used to collect wild flowers from all around the countryside,' she says. 'I wasn't particularly interested in gardening then; in fact, I didn't like garden flowers, I thought they looked like the ones made of silk or plastic that were sold in some florists' shops – to me, the only real ones were wild. I was intrigued by the way they managed to flower in really awkward places, like cracks in rocks or on cliff tops.' Nowadays, the garden owes much to plants that originated in far-off lands, though they seem as much at home in her garden as they did in China or the Himalayas. She has a come-what-may attitude to the garden, rather like an affectionate aunt who is quite happy for children to run about undisciplined as long as they don't do any serious damage.

With two forthcoming exhibitions to prepare for, and a ready supply of subject material at her back door, finding time to work in the garden has been difficult recently. She now employs an extra gardener but, despite the need to paint, she knows that, to maintain her connection with her subject matter, 'you have to get your hands dirty'.

- 1 In the first paragraph, the writer describes Susan's garden as
 - A having caused problems for the previous owners.
 - B having a path lined with flowers.
 - C needing a lot of work to keep it looking attractive.
 - D being only partly finished.
- 2 What does 'this' in line 12 refer to?
 - A the position of the path
 - B the number of wild plants
 - C the position of the garden
 - D the harmony of the planting
- 3 What does Susan say about Danny?
 - A He felt she was interfering in his work.
 - B He immediately understood her feelings.
 - C He was recommended by the previous owners.
 - D He was slow to see the point of some of her ideas.
- 4 What is Susan's approach to painting?
 - A She will wait until a flower is ready to be picked before painting it.
 - B She likes to do research on a plant before she paints it.
 - C She spends all day painting an individual flower.
 - D She creates her paintings in several stages.
- 5 Susan thinks that tulips
 - A are more colourful and better shaped than other flowers.
 - B are not easy to paint because they change so quickly.
 - C look best some time after they have been cut.
 - D should be kept in the house for as long as possible.
- 6 Why did Susan enjoy studying wild flowers at school?
 - A She found the way they adapted to their surroundings fascinating.
 - B She used the lessons as a good excuse to get out of school.
 - C She was attracted by their different colours and shapes.
 - D She wanted to learn how to make copies of them in material.
- 7 How does the writer describe Susan's attitude to her garden?
 - A She thinks children should be allowed to enjoy it.
 - B She prefers planting flowers from overseas.
 - C She likes a certain amount of disorder.
 - D She dislikes criticism of her planting methods.
- 8 What point is Susan making in the final paragraph?
 - A It's essential to find the time to paint even if there is gardening to be done.
 - B It's important not to leave the gardening entirely to other people.
 - C It's good to have expert help when you grow plants.
 - D It's hard to do exhibitions if there are not enough plants ready in the garden.

Part 2

You are going to read a magazine article about letter writing. Seven sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A–H** the one which fits each gap (**9–15**). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

Drop me a line!



In our fast world of phones, emails and computers, the old-fashioned art of letter writing is at risk of disappearing altogether. Yet, to me, there is something about receiving a letter that cannot be matched by any other form of communication. There is the excitement of its arrival, the pleasure of seeing who it is from and, finally, the enjoyment of the contents.

Letter writing has been part of my life for as long as I can remember. It probably began with the little notes I would write to my mother. My mother, also, always insisted I write my own thank-you letters for Christmas and birthday presents. **9**

When I left home at 18 to train as a doctor in London, I would write once a week, and so would my mother. Occasionally my father would write and it was always a joy to receive his long, amusing letters. **10** Of course, we also made phone calls but it is the letters I remember most.

There were also letters from my boyfriends. In my youth I seemed to attract people who had to work or study away at some time and I was only able to stay in touch by correspondence. **11** I found that I could often express myself more easily in writing than by talking.

I love the letters that come with birthday or Christmas cards. **12** And it's even nicer

when it's an airmail envelope with beautiful stamps. My overseas letters arrive from Mangala in Sri Lanka, from someone I trained with over 20 years ago, and I have a penfriend in Australia and another in Vancouver.

Then there's the lady who writes to me from France. If we hadn't started talking in a restaurant on the way home from holiday, if my husband hadn't taken her photo and if I hadn't asked her for her address, I would never have been able to write to her. **13** As it is, we now have a regular correspondence. I can improve my French (she speaks no English); we have stayed at her home twice and she has stayed with us.

My biggest letter-writing success, however, came this summer, when my family and I stayed with my American penfriend in Texas. **14** Everyone was amazed that a correspondence could last so long. The local press even considered the correspondence worth reporting on the front page.

I am pleased that my children are carrying on the tradition. Like my mother before me, I insist they write their own thank-you letters. My daughter writes me little letters, just as I did to my mother. **15** However convenient communicating by email may appear to be, I strongly urge readers not to allow letter writing to become another 'lost art'.