



Bigfoot (B1 - Lower Intermediate)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. What mythical creatures are there in the folklore of your country?
2. Are they considered to be good or bad to humans? Why?
3. Have you ever heard of Bigfoot?

B – Listen and answer

Read these statements. Then listen (without reading) and choose the correct answer.

1. According to the legend, Bigfoot lives in some mountainous areas in
 - a) the United States.
 - b) Canada.
 - c) in both of these countries.
2. Bigfoot is also called Sasquatch, which means in the language of indigenous Salish peoples.
 - a) large men.
 - b) wild men.
 - c) ferocious beasts.
3. Bigfoot is described as being
 - a) around 2½ metres tall.
 - b) over 5 metres tall.
 - c) up to 4½ metres tall.
4. People who say they have seen it disagree about
 - a) whether it makes a noise.
 - b) its colour.
 - c) how fast it runs.
5. Footprints of the creature were first discovered
 - a) at the beginning of the 19th century.
 - b) in the early 18th century.
 - c) in the 1960s.
6. About a quarter of adult Americans believe Bigfoot exists.
 - a) True.
 - b) False.
 - c) The articles doesn't say.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. What species does Bigfoot belong to?
2. When did it get the nickname Bigfoot? How?
3. What other mysterious creature is it compared to?
4. What does the article say about its appearance?
5. What films of it are available?
6. Why are many scientists sceptical about the sightings of Bigfoot?
7. What were the results of the genetic analysis carried out on samples of hair?
8. Why do some scientists still think a similar creature may exist?

D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense, or change from singular to plural.)

1. _____ are carried out regularly to measure public opinion regarding government policies.
2. What's that strange object in the sky? It doesn't _____ anything I've ever seen before.
3. Elephants are the largest land _____ on earth.
4. The little boy escaped from his parents and was later found _____ round a large toy shop.
5. I'm sure this meat has gone bad. It tastes really _____.
6. I'm never going to invite Tom again. His behaviour was _____ unacceptable.

E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam? (Paper 1, Reading: Part 5)

Choose the correct word in brackets for each space.

The Yeti, or Abominable Snowman, is said to be a large ape-like creature which lives in the Himalayan mountain range in Asia and has ¹_____ (much/greatly/long/ever) been a part of Tibetan folklore. Like Bigfoot, it walks on two legs and is covered in long hair. ²_____ (Through/Though/Despite/Moreover) there have been many sightings, no yeti has ever been caught. However a small Buddhist monastery at Khumjung, 85 miles east of Nepal's capital Kathmandu, ³_____ (complains/argues/tells/claims) it is in possession of a yeti skull. After ⁴_____ (conquest/conquering/to conquer/conquered) Everest in 1953, Sir Edmund Hilary returned to the region in 1960 to search for evidence of the existence of the yeti. He took the skull back home to be examined by zoologists, who discovered that it ⁵_____ (had/has/was/is) been fabricated using the skin of a local goat. The yeti skull was returned to the monastery, where it is ⁶_____ (hardly/always/still/yet) preserved to this day.

F – Write about it

Write about one of your country's mythical creatures. Mention:

- what the creature looks like;
- when/where it appears;
- where it originated;
- how it behaves with humans.

Alcatraz (B1 - Lower Intermediate)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. What famous prisons are there in your country?
2. Can you name any dangerous criminals that have been imprisoned there?
3. Have there been any famous escapes from the prison? If so, when? What happened?

B – Listen and answer

Read these incomplete statements. Then listen (without reading) and complete them.

1. Alcatraz Island was a maximum security prison between _____ and 1963.
2. It was nicknamed "the _____".
3. The island was a _____ during the American Civil War.
4. The prison cells in Alcatraz measured three metres by _____ metres.
5. Over the years, there were _____ escape attempts, involving 36 prisoners.
6. Out of these, _____ were recaptured alive.
7. In 1962, three prisoners escaped on an inflatable raft made out of _____.
8. The prison was closed because of the cost of transporting _____ and waste.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. How far is Alcatraz from the coast of California?
2. What made it difficult to escape from the island by swimming across the bay?
3. How did the island get its name?
4. Which of the people imprisoned there were not dangerous criminals?
5. How did prisoners occupy their time?
6. What probably happened to the escaped prisoners Theodore Cole and Ralph Roe?
7. Why is it thought possible that the prisoners who escaped in 1962 might have found freedom?
8. How did Robert Franklin Stroud get the nickname “the Birdman”?

D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense, or change from singular to plural.)

1. The washing machine's not working. We'll have to take our dirty washing to the _____.
2. My friend Jake has a farm in Scotland where he _____ sheep.
3. We can't drive home in this fog. It's too _____.
4. At high _____, the sea covers the whole beach and all these rocks are under water.
5. Our dog loves _____ holes. Unfortunately, he's ruined our garden!
6. Highgate Cemetery contains the _____ of many famous people, including Karl Marx.

E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam? (Paper 1, Reading: Part 6)

Write one word only in each space.

Alcatraz Island was once the ¹_____ secure federal prison in the United States. Now the prison is a museum ²_____ by millions of tourists each year. Ferries leave Pier 33 in San Francisco ³_____ 30 minutes to take you to the island where you can explore the prison and island on your ⁴_____ or take a guided tour with a park ranger who will ⁵_____ you everything about the history of the prison and the notorious criminals who were locked up there. It will ⁶_____ you about two to three hours to do a complete tour of the island and prison.

F – Write about it

Write about a notorious criminal from your country. Mention:

- where he/she was from;
- what crime(s) he/she was guilty of;
- whether he/she was caught;
- what punishment he /she received (if any).

Ian McEwan – Life's Lessons (C1 - Advanced)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Do you prefer to read fiction or non-fiction?
2. Who is your favourite writer?
3. Have you ever heard of Ian McEwan?
4. If so, have you read any of his novels?

B – Listen and answer

Read these statements. Then listen (without reading) and write T (true) or F (false).

1. Ian McEwan is both an author and screenwriter.
2. The film version of his novel Atonement won several Oscars.

3. McEwan's father was an army officer serving in South Africa.
4. His latest novel *Lessons* features a character, Roland, whose experiences are similar to his own.
5. Roland's life eventually diverges from that of the author.
6. McEwan had to do a fair amount of research for the novel.
7. In his opinion, people often find non-chronological novels more difficult to read.
8. In *Lessons*, McEwan explores the roles that chance and choice play in people's lives.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. Which prestigious literary prize did McEwan win? When? With which book?
2. What impression do you get from the article about McEwan's political views?
3. Why does McEwan cite a series of events on the world stage?
4. What does he say about the way his character reacts to these events?
5. What examples does McEwan give of aspects of our lives over which we have no control?
6. How is the behaviour of his character Alissa in contrast with the idea of lives driven by chance?

D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense, or change from singular to plural.)

1. I bought this phone charger online, but I'll have to return it because it's _____.
2. The *Lusitania* was a British ocean liner that was _____ by a German submarine in 1915.
3. Martin started studying for a degree in physics but _____ before finishing it.
4. Helen was sure she had seen the woman before, but she couldn't _____ when or where.
5. A local restaurant was closed by health inspectors because _____ were found in the kitchen.
6. An e-book reader is a useful portable electronic _____ that can hold thousands of e-books.

E – Ready for the C1 ADVANCED English Test? (Reading and Use of English, Part 4)

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. Use between 3 and 6 words including the word given.

Example: In 2007, a film version of the novel *Atonement* came out.

MADE The novel *Atonement* was made into a film in 2007.

1. McEwan's prominence on the literary scene started in 1975.
HAS McEwan _____ on the literary scene since 1975.
2. The main character in *Lessons* lives in Libya as a child.
SPENDS The main character in *Lessons* _____ in Libya.
3. McEwan was not like Roland because he discovered writing.
MIGHT McEwan _____ if he had never discovered writing.
4. You don't choose your parents and you don't get to choose your friends, either.
NOR You don't choose your parents. _____ to choose your friends.
5. Alissa ruthlessly chooses her own fate.
MAKES Alissa _____ about her own fate.
6. Until 1956, the Suez Canal belonged to the Suez Canal Company.
BY Until 1956, the Suez Canal _____ the Suez Canal Company.

F – Write about it

Write about one of your country's best-known novelists. Mention:

- when/where he/she was born;
- what kinds of novels he/she writes/wrote;

- which works he/she is most famous for;
 - which literary awards (if any) he/she has won.
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The Bell Jar by Sylvia Plath (B2 - Upper Intermediate)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Are you interested in poetry?
2. If so, do you have a favourite poem?
3. Who are your country's best-known poets?

B – Listen and answer

Read these statements. Then listen (without reading) and write T (true) or F (false).

1. Sylvia Plath started writing poetry as a teenager.
2. Her first collection of poems was published in 1965.
3. Her novel *The Bell Jar* did not come out under her real name at first.
4. Esther, the main character, is a well-known journalist working for a women's magazine.
5. The events of the novel mirror Sylvia Plath's own experiences.
6. Esther's depression makes her more sensitive to the needs and feelings of other people.
7. Plath committed suicide a short time after *The Bell Jar* was published.
8. Her story was told in a biographical film in 2003.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. What award did Sylvia Plath win for her poetry?
2. Why doesn't Esther enjoy her internship at *Lady's Day* magazine?
3. What similarities are there between Plath's life and that of her fictional character Esther?
4. Why did many women in America feel more oppressed in the 1950s than during World War II?
5. What does the "bell jar" of the title represent?
6. How does Esther's reaction to her situation differ from that of Sylvia Plath's.

D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense, or change from singular to plural.)

1. Energy prices _____ last year as a result of the war in Ukraine.
2. Ann found it hard to make friends at the sports club. She felt she didn't really _____
3. We invited George to our party, but he _____ with six of his awful friends!
4. Harry's been behaving very oddly lately. I think he may be having a _____.
5. Chloe's got a _____ tonight. She's going to the cinema with one of her classmates.
6. Over 50 per cent of people pass their driving test at their first _____.

E – Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English? (Reading and Use of English, Part 1)

Read the text and decide which word in brackets best fits each gap.

Ted Hughes was a poet, translator and children's writer. Critics ¹_____ (point/show/look/regard) him as one of the greatest writers of the 20th century. In 1984 he was appointed Poet Laureate, a position which he ²_____ (held/took/got/carried) until his death in 1998.

In 1956 he met and married Sylvia Plath, who was studying at Cambridge. ³_____ (All/Either/Two/Both) of them continued writing throughout their six-year marriage, during which the couple had two ⁴_____ (sons/children/boys/babies), Frieda Rebecca and Nicholas Farrar. However, Plath moved out of the family home when Hughes started an ⁵_____ (arrangement/affair/accord/argument) with German translator Assia Wevill in 1962.

Suffering from depression which was made ⁶ _____ (very/lot/much/some) worse by Hughes' infidelity, Plath took her own life in 1963. Hughes was accused by many feminists of having driven her to suicide and, as a result, he received a series of ⁷ _____ (dead/death/mortal/dying) threats.

Six years later, Assia Wevill killed herself, as ⁸ _____ (well/long/soon/far) as her four-year old daughter by Hughes, using the same method as Silvia Plath: asphyxiation from a gas stove.

F – Write about it

Write about one of your country's most famous poets. Include information about:

- his/her life;
 - the kind of poetry he/she writes/wrote;
 - his/her best-known works.
-

Answers: Bigfoot (B1 - Lower Intermediate)

B – Listen and answer

1. c 2. b 3. c 4. a 5. a 6. b

C – Read and answer

1. It belongs to the primate species. 2. It got it in the 1950s when a California newspaper column reported that a giant footprint had been discovered at a construction site. 3. It's compared to the Yeti, or Abominable Snowman, of the Himalayas. 4. It says it's 2 to 4.5 metres tall and is covered in long bristly hair. 5. There's a grainy video filmed in 1967 and another filmed more recently from a train by a Colorado couple. 6. Because many sightings were found to be fraudulent or mistaken. 7. They showed that the hairs came from a variety of common animals, like bears, canids, cows and horses. 8. Because discoveries of new species still happen and some parts of our world remain unexplored.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. Polls 2. resemble 3. mammals 4. roaming 5. foul 6. altogether

E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam?

1. long 2. Though 3. claims 4. conquering 5. had 6. still
-

Answers: Alcatraz (B1 - Lower Intermediate)

B – Listen and answer

1. 1934 2. Rock 3. military fort 4. 1.5 5. fourteen 6. twenty-three 7. raincoats
8. fresh water

C – Read and answer

1. It's two kilometres from the California coast. 2. The waters are freezing and the tides are treacherous. 3. It was named "Isla de los Alcatraces" – Isle of the Gannets - by a Spanish naval officer in 1775, because of the seabirds that lived there. 4. The indigenous people, the Hopi, were imprisoned there for passively resisting attempts to assimilate them. 5. They did factory work, laundry, prison maintenance and food preparation. 6. They probably died when they were swept out into the ocean. 7. In 2014, two Dutch academics, with the help of tidal experts, calculated the routes the raft might have taken and concluded that they might have survived and reached freedom. 8. While in prison, he reared and sold birds and became a respected ornithologist.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. laundry 2. rears 3. thick 4. tide 5. digging 6. graves

E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam?

1. most 2. visited 3. every 4. own 5. tell 6. take

Answers: Ian McEwan – Life's Lessons (C1 - Advanced)

B – Listen and answer

1. T 2. F – It won one Oscar for Best Original Score. 3. F – He was an army officer serving in North Africa. 4. T 5. T 6. F – He says he did absolutely no research for it. 7. F – It's his opinion that they find them easy to read. 8. T

C – Read and answer

1. He won the Booker Prize in 1998 with his book *Amsterdam*. 2. He seems to be concerned about the environment and in favour of limiting climate change. He was against Brexit and he seems to condemn discrimination against women. 3. Because they are events that had an impact on his life and on the life of his character Roland. 4. He says his character responds in the same way as he does to virtually every situation. 5. The examples he gives are our genes, our families, our friends, and what happens in the society in which we grow up. 6. Alissa chooses to do what she wants to do without regard for her husband or seven-month-old baby.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. faulty 2. sunk 3. dropped out 4. recall 5. cockroaches 6. device

E – Ready for the C1 ADVANCED English Test?

1. has been prominent 2. spends his childhood 3. might have been like Roland 4. Nor do you get 5. makes a ruthless choice 6. was owned by

Answers: The Bell Jar by Sylvia Plath (B2 - Upper Intermediate)

B – Listen and answer

1. F – She had her first poem published when she was eight years old. 2. F – It was published in 1960. 3. T 4. F – She is a college girl doing a summer internship at a women's magazine. 5. T 6. F – It makes her lose her empathy. 7. T 8. T

C – Read and answer

1. She won the Pulitzer Prize in 1981. 2. She finds the work unrewarding and doesn't fit in with the other girls on the programme. 3. Like her character Esther, Plath also worked for a women's magazine and suffered from depression which led her to attempt suicide. 4. Because after the war, women lost many of the liberties they had gained and were forced to go back to being wives and mothers rather than workers. 5. It represents the status of women who are regarded as ornaments placed in a glass display case. 6. After psychoanalysis and shock therapy, Esther regains her sense of self and sees hope in the future. Instead, Sylvia Plath took her own life.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. soared 2. fit in 3. turned up 4. breakdown 5. date 6. attempt1.

E – Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English?

1. regard 2. held 3. Both 4. children 5. affair 6. much 7. death 8. welly