

Part 5

You are going to read a newspaper article about libraries. For questions 31–36, 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.

Why libraries matter in today's technological world

Municipal libraries are perhaps one of the most enduring public institutions – priceless repositories of history, language, and culture. The dawn of the ‘information superhighway’ threatened to make them less relevant, even obsolete. Yet now, these institutions are extending their mission well beyond the storage of knowledge. Indeed, to distinguish themselves in a world where Google is well on its way to digitally scanning most of the books ever written, libraries are learning to avail themselves of the simple fact that they are centrally located in almost every community in the USA. In other words, libraries now see success being linked to their role as public places and destinations.

While many US cities and towns now recognize the importance of re-inventing public libraries as destinations, this awareness doesn't always translate into a well-rounded success. The most high-profile new libraries rely on stylized designs to create buzz, feeding a false perception that public libraries are all about attention-grabbing looks. But when the tour bus crowds stop coming, these libraries will sink or swim based on how well they serve the needs of their respective communities – whether they are truly great places, not just eye-catching buildings.

There are plenty of unsung libraries that embody a very different and more compelling vision of what it means to be a public place. They may fly under the radar as architectural landmarks, but they still garner respect, praise and even adoration on account of their innovative management and programming. They are taking on a larger civic role – balancing their traditional needs and operations with outreach to the wider community – thereby contributing to the creation of a physical commons that benefits the public as a whole. If the traditional model of the library was the inward-focused community ‘reading room’, the current one is more like a community ‘front porch’.

line 14

line 15

But what of universities and other academic institutions; what is the value of an academic library in an age of abundant information? A recent report commissioned by the Online Computer Library Center focusing on college students found that they use libraries more than any other demographic group, that they like to help themselves to information, that they are aware of the library's electronic resources, and that they identify libraries with books (but they don't seem to feel that's a bad thing, unlike the so called experts who authored the report who reveal deep dismay at that finding). What's more, they supplement library resources with ones found on the web (no surprise there; don't we all?), they are largely satisfied with services and facilities and they are strongly attached to the idea of libraries.

line 19

line 20

For college students, the library is like the poet Robert Frost's idea of home, ‘the place where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in.’ They may not want to be there, they may not have any real curiosity about the topic they are researching, but the library is a gateway to the sources they need, and for at least some students the librarians are ‘saviors’ who help them take an assignment and locate sources that will match.

Of course, these days any distinction between library and digital information is obsolete. But there is a valid distinction between printed book and the web, as there is between library and home computer. And the fact is, there are things that the web cannot offer which any library can. In a library it's the totality of the experience that matters: the website, the face-to-face services, the catalog, the collection. Staff are on hand to ensure the user's reaction to the library is positive and productive, especially the novice user. Moreover, a library creates relationships. It develops in users a sense of belonging, both to the library community, whether local or academic, and to the wider world of knowledge. In this and other respects, the billions of web pages in existence do not carry the same symbolic weight as the library. It stands for the importance of knowledge, for access, for the idea that pursuing questions is a valuable human endeavor. We would do well not to dismiss that symbolism as mere nostalgia.

- 31** What point is the writer making about public libraries in the first paragraph?
- A** They are struggling to survive in the digital age.
 - B** They will have to find a completely new purpose.
 - C** They are taking full advantage of an existing benefit.
 - D** They may well have to give up their function of storing books.
- 32** In the second paragraph, the writer's purpose is to
- A** warn libraries against trusting in new buildings to attract users.
 - B** praise libraries which recognize the benefits of tourism.
 - C** stress the need for libraries to consult local residents.
 - D** advise libraries to move to more central locations.
- 33** Which phrase illustrates 'a very different and more compelling vision of what it means to be a public place'? (lines 14–15)
- A** they may fly under the radar (line 15)
 - B** architectural landmarks (line 15)
 - C** community 'reading room' (line 19)
 - D** community 'front porch' (line 20)
- 34** What is the writer emphasising in the first bracketed comment in the fourth paragraph?
- A** her contempt for the reaction of the report writers
 - B** her concern for the outdated attitudes of the students
 - C** her doubt about the range of library users that were questioned
 - D** her distrust regarding the motives of those commissioning the report
- 35** Why does the writer quote the poet Robert Frost's definition of home?
- A** to underline the literary value of a library's resources
 - B** to describe the function an academic library is required to fulfil
 - C** to suggest the paternal role taken by some college librarians
 - D** to express the sense of comfort libraries used to give their readers
- 36** In comparing libraries and the Internet, the writer
- A** is urging libraries to concentrate on doing what they do best.
 - B** suggests there is no essential difference between them.
 - C** is making the case for the existence of libraries as a separate entity.
 - D** appears to regard libraries as an unnecessary luxury.

Part 6

You are going to read a magazine article about white-water rafting. Seven paragraphs have been removed from the extract. Choose from the paragraphs **A–H** the one which fits each gap (37–43). There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use. Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

A Wet and Wonderful Ride

Cameron Wilson is swept away by the thrill of Tasmania's formidable Franklin River

Tasmania's Franklin River is a renowned rafting destination, both for the beauty and remoteness of the country through which it flows and for the challenge it presents the rafter. I'd been told by one of the guides on my trip that 'portage' is an indispensable word in the river rafter's lexicon. It derives from the French where it means 'physically carrying boats between two navigable stretches of a river'.

40

Thanks to the light but steady rain, however, the river level turned out to be high enough for us to glide over small rocks, and portage comfortably around the bigger ones, on the way to our first campsite. Conditions there turned out to be typical of those for the entire trip; the ravine drops steeply to the river and there is not much level ground, so rock overhangs make handy shelters.

37

Such is the challenge of expedition rafting and the truth is, I was loving every minute of it. I glanced over at Brendan, at twenty-one the younger of our two river guides, and his grin confirmed that he too was having a ball, despite appearing in imminent danger of being swept off his feet and into the torrent. 'Mate,' he yelled over the roar of the rapids, 'like I keep telling them... this is not a holiday!'

41

The summit is more than half a vertical mile above the Franklin. It's the perfect spot from which to take in the unspoilt beauty of the country we'd been travelling through, its mountains, forests, high-country lakes and tarns.

38

A measure of respect, therefore, seemed in order, as I psyched myself up for rafting through the heart of the wilderness that had been so hard fought for. I was one of a group of ten – eight clients plus two guides – mustered over an early breakfast in Collingwood Bridge, two and a half hours north-west of the Tasmanian capital, Hobart.

42

Ironically enough, it was not until we struck one of the less celebrated stretches of white water that our only real rafting drama occurred. Shaun and his crew had wrapped their raft around a boulder and there it stayed for twenty minutes, held in place by the fast-flowing white water.

39

A light drizzle was beginning to close in as we donned helmets and life-jackets, and pushed off into the gentle currents of a calm tributary. It was plain sailing so far, but I knew these tranquil waters would carry us on down to the raging Franklin. The afternoon was spent becoming acquainted with our raft buddies, or with pressing Shaun and Brendan for stories about Franklin expeditions from days gone by.

43

As the river widened, such white-knuckle experiences became fewer and further between, and as we eased into a leisurely paddling rhythm, twice I caught sight of platypus crossing the river. The silences grew longer and more comfortable, and as we slipped along under a blue sky the quiet was broken now and then by Shaun enquiring: 'How's the serenity?' On each occasion it was well above par.

- A** Having hung gamely on for a minute or two, Simon, a tax auditor from Brisbane, was finally dragged away for a bumpy solo ride to the bottom of the cascades. He came up bruised but smiling. I think it summed up how we were all feeling about the trip at that point.
- B** I had reason to reflect upon this information as I scrambled about on a slippery rock, trying to carry a heavy rubber raft between two boulders. The gap was too narrow and I was under constant assault from thousands of litres of white water. However expressed, this was a skill you couldn't do without if you were going to raft down the Franklin.
- C** It just went to prove how right our guide had been. A Franklin expedition is not a joy ride. It is, however, an opportunity to experience life on a river that, thanks to those who campaigned to save it, survives as one of the world's great wilderness journeys.
- D** Some of the stretches we'd be doing could be rafted straight through apparently, with the boulders under two metres of water. At other times the river gets so low we'd have to do a high portage – unload the gear, deflate and carry the lot through the forest. But you never knew because the river presents a new challenge each and every time.
- E** The moment arrived to pack our gear and supplies into barrels and 'dry bags' and lash these to aluminium frames, which were then secured in the two rafts. Our trip leader, Shaun, briefed us on how to handle a difficult portage or riding a rugged set of rapids, and talked us through ways of getting back into a raft from which you've just tumbled.
- F** The next few days saw both raft crews functioning superbly as we traversed the next section of river, responding as one to commands, as we bounced off logs and boulders through rapids. These were evocatively referred to by names such as 'The Cauldron', 'Nasty Notch' and 'Thunderush'.
- G** There was no doubting the truth of this assertion. I'd chosen this trip for a number of reasons, not least the fact that the Franklin is famous for the events of 1983. That's when thousands of people took to the streets or chained themselves to bulldozers to save it from being dammed and flooded, in what remains one of the largest environmental campaigns in Australia's history.
- H** Roused by Brendan, we'd be coaxed from our cocoons each day with the aroma of fresh coffee. On the day of our third such awakening, the sky had cleared beautifully, which meant fleece jackets and waterproofs could give way to dark glasses and sunscreen. The conditions were ideal for the long day's hike to Frenchman's Cap.

Part 7

You are going to read an article about ballet. For questions **44–53**, choose from the sections (**A–D**). The sections may be chosen more than once. Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

In which section does the writer mention

the level of fitness needed to engage in an activity?

44	
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an explanation of the remedial health benefits of an activity?

45	
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being surprised to see an outcome in a short space of time?

46	
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ballet exercises as a form of escapism?

47	
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a feeling of contentment arising out of physical activity?

48	
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chance remarks that were a source of inspiration?

49	
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the challenging range of skills and abilities required by ballet?

50	
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the idea that people should attempt something beyond their normal capabilities?

51	
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how an activity might be unfairly regarded by some people?

52	
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the effect of the activity on the ability to resist an indulgence?

53	
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Is ballet the new gym?

*Celebrities are not alone in finding ballet training gives them a good workout,
says Abigail Hoffman*

A

I always find the winter months difficult here in London, but exercise can help to beat the winter blues because during any exercise routine, the body produces 'happy' endorphins. With attractive flushed cheeks and a warm glow of post-exercise smugness, you will feel much better than if you were suffering the inevitable side-effects of other types of weight-loss programme. I'm not suggesting you high-tail it to the gym, however. Gyms are anathema to many, who perceive them as overly competitive and so twentieth century. No, I'm recommending that you follow the example of celebrities and take to the barre. Devotees in New York, London and Paris cite suppleness, strength and a sculpted silhouette as the chief benefits of a ballet-based fitness regime. Deride it, if you will, as the latest media-fuelled fad, but increasingly exercise professionals are referring to ballet as the 'new Pilates'. Its benefits have also been noted by the New Zealand rugby team, who have been known to incorporate ballet moves into their training routine.

B

Charlotte Toner, a former professional ballerina, has been at the forefront of this trend. Some years ago, she developed what is known as her 'floor barre' class, which incorporates elementary ballet and Pilates-type movements. 'I fell into teaching it because my friends were always asking how I kept in shape,' she says. 'Then I discovered there was so much demand that I had to get my act together and produce a proper timetable.' Injured dancers often do floor barre because as the name implies, you work mainly lying on the floor rather than standing at the barre. Since the back is supported, it's relatively risk-free. Joy Waiter, a leading physiotherapist, says: 'This combination of movement and stretch, underpinned by stability, is a good model for most people with back problems. Floor barre is also an ideal exercise routine for those not in the first flush of youth.' Ballet's focus on lengthening rather than contracting muscles promotes flexibility, maintaining a lithe appearance. 'If you attend class regularly, you'll be noticing a difference in body shape in no time,' Charlotte assured me.

C

Charlotte offers a variety of classes, each lasting seventy-five minutes, and can accommodate complete beginners at floor barre as well as advanced ballet performers. Participants span the generations and it's comforting to realise that you don't need the co-ordination skills of an acrobat or the stamina of an Olympic marathon runner to attempt a plié at the barre. 'If you can walk on a treadmill,' she insists, 'you can do floor barre.' Co-ordination, elegance and suppleness come with practice. I was recommended to take up floor barre when persistent lower back pain prevented me from working out in the gym. After a mere six-week course with Charlotte, attending three sessions a week, my back improved and muscle tone was starting to replace dimpled flab. I also lost 4.5kg effortlessly; somehow glimpsing my podgy reflection in triplicate in the studio mirrors eviscerated my desire for chips and chocolate.

D

But the appeal goes beyond the visible results; many devotees highlight another side of ballet. 'It's about expressing myself in a different way,' one says. 'The melodic music transports you far from the daily grind.' Françoise Peretti, managing director of her own public-relations firm, puts it well. 'Ballet tones my body but it also tones my soul,' she says. 'As a former investment banker used to analysing the nuances of financial markets, I was unprepared for how ballet challenges the intellect as well as the body. There's a litany of things to remember and it calls for both concentration and mental agility. Co-ordinating your arms and legs is difficult enough but you also have to simultaneously stand tall, lower your shoulders, breathe correctly and memorise the often complex routines.' So, if you too are gazing despondently at the overcast sky, wondering desperately how you're ever going to get through the winter months as you long to burrow back under the bedcovers, think about shaking a leg – literally. Step outside your comfort zone and treat yourself to a fitness regime that is fun, uplifting and very effective. Take up floor barre. Your thighs will thank you for it.