

How did you know the answers?

Highlight the language that helped you!

SAM: I'm at the Super Fan Cosplay Convention, this year in central London. Everywhere I look, there are people dressed up as superheroes, cartoon characters, characters from video games ... There are sci-fi characters too. Ticket sales indicate that there are over ten thousand cosplayers here today. That's a lot! Four of them have agreed to join me and answer some questions about what cosplay is and why they do it.

Hi, guys! Wow, you all look amazing! Tina, I'll start with you. First of all, can you tell the listeners: what is cosplay?

TINA: Well, it was actually the Japanese that created the word *cosplay*. It comes from 'costume play'. Basically, we make costumes so that we can look like our favourite characters from pop culture, and then we come to conventions like this. I'm not sure, but I think it all started in the early 90s. People all over the world do it now.

SAM: And how did you become interested in it, Tina?

TINA: Well, I've always been a big fan of animated films, and when I heard that there were people who dressed up as their favourite princesses, I decided I wanted to do the same.

SAM: I have to say, your costume is incredible. You're Rapunzel with all her long hair, right?

TINA: Of course. That's me!

SAM: And did you make the costume yourself?

TINA: Yes, all of it is my work. It's one of five costumes that I've made. I think this one's my favourite. I love having long, long hair!

SAM: And are there a lot of other princesses here today?

TINA: Yes. I've actually entered a competition for the best princess costume, but I'm not sure if I'll win, as twenty-three other princesses have also signed up. Some of the others look absolutely amazing!

SAM: If you ask me, I think you deserve to win. I think your costume is perfect! Good luck! And how about you, Frankie? Why do you like cosplay?

FRANKIE: I just love coming to these conventions. It's great to meet people who have the same interests as me. I'm usually pretty shy, to be honest. I don't find it easy to talk to people I don't know really well.

SAM: You seem very confident today.

FRANKIE: Well, yeah, that's because I'm here, surrounded by people who are just like me. And perhaps because nobody can ¹⁰ actually see my face! I've made so many friends from coming to conventions like this. It's really helped me.

SAM: That's great to hear Frankie, and I love your costume too. It's pretty scary!

FRANKIE: Yeah ... it's just a bit hot inside here!

SAM: I can imagine! And ... Chloe. Can I say, your costume is absolutely incredible. It's so detailed. You really do look as if you've come straight out of a Japanese comic book.

CHLOE: Thanks. Yes, I think the main reason I like cosplay so much is that I love Japanese pop culture like manga and anime and I really love making costumes. I've become interested in how to do make-up, how to do hair, how to design the costumes – everything.

SAM: So you made every single part of this costume?

CHLOE Oh, yeah. I didn't buy any of this. It's all homemade.

SAM: Wow, you could be a professional costume designer.

CHLOE Well, I've learned a lot since I started doing cosplay. Actually, I'm now studying design at college as I'd love to become a costume designer for films and TV. Let's see ...

SAM: Well, good luck with that. You certainly have talent!

And last but not least, Erica ... how did you become interested in cosplay?

ERICA: Erm ... well ... For me, cosplay gives me the chance to live out my dreams. I've always loved superheroes, and I go and see every superhero film that comes out!

SAM: So a dedicated superhero fan.

ERICA: That's right! ... I may not have superpowers – I can't fly at supersonic speed or make myself invisible – but I can come to events like this and I can meet people who are just as into superheroes as I am. And being dressed up like this just makes it more fun.

SAM: Did you make this costume?

ERICA: No. I'm not as interested in the costume-making side as these guys. I bought this at a store, but that's OK. As far as I'm concerned, cosplay conventions are welcoming to everyone. You just have to be a fan of pop culture and be happy to wear a costume.

SAM: Well, it certainly looks like a lot of fun. Thanks for talking to me, guys. Enjoy the rest of the convention.