



## Agatha Christie (B1 - Lower Intermediate)

### A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Do you enjoy murder mysteries? If so, are you good at guessing who the murderer is?
2. Do you have a favourite detective writer? If so, who? Why do you like his/her stories?
3. Have you read any Agatha Christie novels or seen the film adaptations?
4. Can you name any of the detectives she created?

### B – Listen and answer

Listen to the two parts of the article (without reading) and write T (true) or F (false).

#### Part One

1. Agatha Christie has sold more books than any other novelist in the world.
2. She started writing when she was eight years old.
3. After creating Miss Marple in 1927, Christie wrote twelve more Miss Marple stories.
4. In the 1975 novel titled *Curtain*, Hercule Poirot retires.

#### Part Two

5. Agatha Christie disappeared for some time while suffering from depression.
6. After her divorce, she never married again.
7. The sales of her books suffered after she was criticised for using racist language.
8. Her novels reveal the negative impulses of human nature.

### C – Read and answer

Read the two parts of the article and answer the questions.

1. What information does the article give you about Agatha Christie's family life?
2. How did she learn about different types of poison?
3. Why did she decide to write a detective novel?
4. Why did the final twist in *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* influence many detective writers?
5. What did Christie do to avoid paying too much tax?
6. What caused her period of depression?
7. Why was there such a widespread search for her when she disappeared?
8. What aspects of her novels led one critic to say Christie was ahead of her time?
9. How long has her play *The Mousetrap* been running?
10. Where is the play set?

### 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. His excuses \_\_\_\_\_ us completely. We really thought he was telling the truth.
2. William Shakespeare, Anton Chekhov and Oscar Wilde were all famous \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Why did you fall asleep during the lesson? Was it tiredness or \_\_\_\_\_?
4. The little boy stole an apple from the market stall because his friend \_\_\_\_\_ him to.

5. The hotels in the centre are too expensive but there are some very good \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Don't read that novel. The \_\_\_\_\_ is far too complicated and the characters are unrealistic.
7. Parents should \_\_\_\_\_ their children about the dangers of interacting with strangers online.
8. I'm sure I saw that actor in a \_\_\_\_\_ a few years ago.

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

*Write one word only in each space.*

Agatha Christie's novel *And then there were none* is the world's <sup>1</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ selling mystery story. Over 100 million copies of it <sup>2</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ been sold. The story is set in a large house on a small deserted island. Eight people are there as the guests of a couple who have not <sup>3</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ arrived. The eight guests die <sup>4</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ by one although there is <sup>5</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ else on the island. How is this possible? If you want to find out, you <sup>6</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ have to read the book!

### **F – Write about it**

*Write about a detective story or thriller that you saw or read recently. Mention:*

- where it's set;
- who the main characters are;
- the main details of the plot;
- why you enjoyed/didn't enjoy it.

## **The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (B2 - Upper Intermediate)**

### **A – Before you start**

*Answer the questions with a partner.*

1. What do you know about your country's sea rescue services? (How are they organised? Where are they stationed? Are they professionals or volunteers? etc.)
2. Are there also lifeguards on rivers and lakes in your country?
3. Can you name any famous shipwrecks?

### **B – Listen and answer**

*Read these incomplete statements. Then listen (without reading) and fill in the blanks.*

1. Sir William Hilary first suggested the creation of a lifeboat service in \_\_\_\_\_.
2. At that time there were about \_\_\_\_\_ shipwrecks a year.
3. The service was founded in 1824 at the City of London \_\_\_\_\_ in Bishopsgate.
4. The service's biggest rescue was in March 1907 when \_\_\_\_\_ people were saved.
5. The RNLI saved thousands of lives during the two \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The organisation also provides \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ safety courses for children.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ per cent of lifeboat crews are unpaid volunteers.
8. The RNLI has recently been \_\_\_\_\_ for rescuing people crossing the Channel in small boats.

### **C – Read and answer**

*Read the article and answer the questions.*

1. How did Sir William Henry get the idea for a lifeboat service?
2. Why was Henry Blogg's service with the RNLI impressive?
3. What figure shows the risks involved in being a member of a lifeboat crew?
4. How did the shipwreck of SS Suevic happen?
5. What rescue services does the RNLI operate?
6. How is it funded?
7. Why are there now lifeboat stations on inland waters?
8. What happened to daily donations to the RNLI after recent criticism of the organisation?
9. What was exceptional about a rescue that took place off the North Devon coast in 1899?
10. Why are the lifeboat stations on the River Thames extremely busy?



## Part Two

6. The places to eat at Covent Garden are

- a) mostly famous restaurants.    b) of all types.    c) mostly inexpensive sandwich shops.

7. At Covent Garden there are specialty shops selling clothes and footwear.

- a) True.    b) False.    c) The article doesn't say.

8. If you're interested in buying prints, you should look around Grosvenor Prints and

- a) Stanfords.    b) the Apple Market    c) Dr. Martens.

## C – Read and answer

*Read the two parts of the article and answer the questions.*

1. Where did the Covent Garden fruit and vegetable market move to in 1974?

2. How did the Earl of Bedford become the owner of the land?

3. What does the article tell you about the church at Covent Garden?

4. Why did the value of the houses in Covent Garden fall in the 18th century?

5. How was the market improved in the 19th century?

6. Why was it necessary to move the market in the 20th century?

7. What did British Punch and Judy shows develop from?

8. What can you buy in Stanfords besides travel books?

9. What can you get at Paul Smith besides clothes?

10. When should you go to the Apple Market if you're interested in antiques?

## 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. On Sundays there's a market in this street with several interesting \_\_\_\_\_ selling paintings.

2. One of the best \_\_\_\_\_ of the new phone is the quality of the screen.

3. These city walls \_\_\_\_\_ to Roman times.

4. Alice's hobby is painting. She's does oil paintings and \_\_\_\_\_.

5. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a private house where you pay rent for a room and cooked meals.

6. Champagne is a white \_\_\_\_\_ wine that comes from the Champagne wine region of France.

7. After the disaster, the government set up a public \_\_\_\_\_ to investigate the causes.

8. I \_\_\_\_\_ the letter ten days ago, so it should have arrived by now.

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

*Choose the correct word in brackets for each space.*

While <sup>1</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (travelled/travelling/to travel/on travel) in France and Italy to study classical architecture, Inigo Jones was impressed <sup>2</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (by/of/from/for) the works of Italian architect Andrea Palladio. Jones <sup>3</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (founded/based/drew/created) his design for Covent Garden on a piazza he had seen in Livorno, Italy, and on Place des Vosges, a beautiful square in Paris. The houses in Covent Garden were revolutionary in style for London. They had elegant, uniform facades with arcades under <sup>4</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (where/them/these/which) people could walk in all weathers. The square became somewhere where people could watch open-air shows or <sup>5</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (make/do/go for/get) a pleasant walk. Twenty years later, <sup>6</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (therefore/then/however/finally), market stalls arrived in the square and, as a result, its wealthy residents began to abandon the area.

## F – Write about it

*Write about one of your country's historic street markets. Mention:*

- when it first opened;
- what's sold there;
- where it's located;
- when it's open.

## Sally Rooney (C1 -Advanced)

### A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Have you got any brothers or sisters? If so, are they older or younger than you?
2. If you haven't, are you happy to be an only child? Why (not)?
3. Some think being an elder, younger, middle or only child affects a person's character as an adult. Do you agree? Why (not)?

### B – Listen and answer

Listen to the two parts of the article (without reading) and write T (true) or F (false).

#### Part One

1. The title of Sally Rooney's latest novel, *Intermezzo*, has two meanings.
2. *Intermezzo* is about two brothers in their thirties.
3. Rooney says she enjoys writing about people who are unable to communicate with each other.
4. She thinks people's roles within their family often change as a result of a break-up or a death.
5. The younger brother is extremely dissatisfied with his present life.
6. Rooney says she always keeps her own life separate from the lives of her characters.
7. Her characters feel the weight of conforming to what is considered to be normal.
8. She says her most successful novels are the ones she planned well before starting to write.

#### Part One

9. Rooney believes people and their lives are deeply affected by their relations with others.
10. She intends her novels to contain a hidden political message.
11. In her opinion, the novels of the past and those of today deal with the same kinds of problem.
12. Rooney has a very popular Facebook page.

### C – Read and answer

Read the two parts of the article and answer the questions.

1. What event are the two main characters of the novel trying to cope with?
2. What differences are there between the two brothers' careers and romantic relationships?
3. Why, according to Rooney, are siblings expected to know each other well?
4. What example does Rooney give of fixed family roles?
5. Why does Peter think his life has gone wrong?
6. Why does Rooney see her writing as a way of controlling the passing of time?
7. Why, in her opinion, do people feel the need to be considered normal?
8. What does she want her readers to feel while reading her novels?
9. What does Rooney mean when she says she views the world through a Marxist framework?
10. How has she expressed her disapproval of the actions of the State of Israel?

### 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 plural to singular.)

1. Meg's excuse for missing the meeting was that she was \_\_\_\_\_ in a lift for over two hours.
2. Simon came up with an idea to solve the problem, but the others \_\_\_\_\_ it as unworkable.
3. To \_\_\_\_\_ with something means to be able to deal with it.
4. Reading artists' autobiographies gives us an \_\_\_\_\_ into the source of their inspiration.
5. You don't need to put this stuff in the fridge. Just \_\_\_\_\_ it in a cool, dry place.
6. It has been discovered that drinking coffee or alcohol can \_\_\_\_\_ headaches.
7. Denzel Washington \_\_\_\_\_ in *Gladiator II* alongside Paul Mescal.
8. A line of trees marks the \_\_\_\_\_ between our garden and a public footpath.

## 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:** Sally Rooney explains how she is able to live different lives through writing.

**ALLOWS** Rooney explains how writing allows her to live different lives.

1. Peter and his brother Ivan are undergoing grief because they have lost their father.

**GRIEVING** Peter and his brother Ivan \_\_\_\_\_ of their father.

2. Lovers are expected to have communication problems.

**THERE** With lovers, \_\_\_\_\_ of miscommunication.

3. Peter planned his life differently and is full of regrets.

**WAY** Peter's life isn't going \_\_\_\_\_ and he's full of regrets.

4. She continues to reflect on the concept of 'normal', especially in social relations.

**SOMETHING** The concept of 'normal' is \_\_\_\_\_, especially in social relations.

5. In a novel, it's a character's relation to others that gives them power.

**WHAT** In a novel, \_\_\_\_\_ their relation to others.

6. The novel emerged from a bourgeois way of seeing things, but it is still relevant.

**POINT** Although the novel emerged from \_\_\_\_\_, it is still relevant.

## F – Talk about it

*In pairs or groups.*

1. Do you enjoy reading novels?
2. If so, do you like the kinds of novels Sally Rooney writes, in which there's conflict between people arising from miscommunication? Why (not)?
3. When you're reading fiction, do you identify with the characters and their lives in the way Rooney describes?
4. Do you have a favourite novel? If so, what is it? Why is it your favourite?

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## Answers: Agatha Christie (B1)

### B – Listen and answer

1. T
2. F – She started writing when she was a teenager.
3. F – She wrote eleven more. The 1927 novel was the first of 12.
4. F – In *Curtain*, Hercule Poirot dies.
5. T
6. F – She married Max Mallowan in 1930.
7. F – The criticism never affected sales of her books.
8. T

### C – Read and answer

1. She came from an upper-middle-class family. She had a sister. Her father died when she was eleven. She was married twice and had a daughter from her first marriage.
2. She worked as a nurse and studied to become an apothecary.
3. Because her sister dared her to write one.
4. Because it broke all the rules of the mystery genre.
5. She only published one novel a year.
6. Her mother died and then her husband asked her for a divorce.
7. Because she was already a major celebrity.
8. Her depiction of homosexual and disabled characters and her criticism of the hypocrisy of upper-class society.
9. It has been running since 1952/for over 70 years.
10. It's set in a remote countryside guesthouse.

### D – Learn it! Use it!

1. fooled
2. playwrights
3. boredom
4. dared
5. guesthouses
6. plot
7. warn
8. stage play.

### E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam?

1. best/highest
  2. have
  3. yet
  4. one
  5. no-one/nobody
  6. will
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## Answers: The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (B2)

### B – Listen and answer

1. 1823 2. 1,800 3. Tavern 4. 456 5. World Wars 6. sea – beach 7. 97 8. criticised

### C – Read and answer

1. He had participated in rescues off the coast of the Isle of Man. 2. He served in the RNLI for over 53 years and helped to rescue 873 people. 3. Six hundred RNLI members have died while rescuing others. 4. The ship hit a reef in a strong gale and dense fog. 5. It operates a 24-hour search and rescue service around the coasts of Britain and Ireland, as well as national and international flood rescue services. 6. It depends on voluntary donations and legacies. 7. Because water activities, like paddle-boarding and wild swimming, have increased in popularity. 8. They rose by 300 per cent. 9. The sea was too rough to launch the lifeboat locally, so eighteen horses and hundreds of local people dragged it across land for thirteen miles to launch it from a calmer place. 10. Because the Thames is a dangerous river with an extremely powerful tide.

### D – Learn it! Use it!

1. swiftly 2. reefs 3. run 4. gale 5. spot 6. floods

### E – Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English?

1. iconic 2. annually 3. respected 4. aircraft/airplanes 5. illegally 6. apolitical  
7. busiest 8. partygoers

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## Answers: Covent Garden (B1)

### B – Listen and answer

1. b 2. a 3. c 4. a 5. c 6. b 7. a 8. b

### C – Read and answer

1. It moved to Vauxhall, south of the River Thames. 2. Henry VIII took possession of the land and granted it to him. 3. It was built by architect Inigo Jones on an Etruscan model and was consecrated in 1683. It's called the Actors' Church because it's in the heart of London's theatre district. 4. Because more and more fruit and vegetable sellers arrived in the area and the atmosphere changed, so wealthy residents started to leave. 5. New buildings, like the Central Market, Floral Hall and Charter Market were constructed to bring order to the market. 6. Because it had become too large for its historic home. 7. They developed from the Italian commedia dell'arte. 8. You can buy globes. 9. You can get sparkling wine, craft beer and Fortnum and Mason teas. 10. You should go there on Mondays because there are stalls selling collectables and antiques.

### D – Learn it! Use it!

1. stalls 2. features 3. date back 4. watercolours 5. boarding house 6. sparkling  
7. inquiry 8. posted

### E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam?

1. travelling 2. by 3. based 4. which 5. go for 6. however

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## Answers: Sally Rooney (C1)

### B – Listen and answer

1. T 2. F – One brother is in his thirties. The other is in his twenties. 3. T 4. T 5. F – It's the elder brother who is dissatisfied. 6. F – While she is writing her novels, she feels like she is living the lives of her characters. 7. T 8. F – She says those are the books that she started writing and failed to finish. 9. T 10. F – Her novels are not coded political manifestos. 11. T 12. F – She is not on social media.

### **C – Read and answer**

1. They're trying to cope with the death of their father. 2. The elder brother has a successful career, while the younger brother is professionally stagnant. The elder brother has a relationship with a much younger, financially unstable girl, while the younger brother has a relationship with an experienced and much older woman. 3. Because they spent their childhood together. 4. She gives the example of siblings, who inherit a role through birth order. Sometimes the younger sibling continues to be 'the baby', even when he/she has become an adult. 5. Because, when he was in his twenties, a significant life event changed the life he had planned to live. 6. Because while she is writing her novels she lives a sort of dream life in which time doesn't pass. 7. Because they want to belong to a particular community in a particular place and time. 8. She wants her readers to feel they are living another special life with her characters, outside of time and space. 9. She means that, like Karl Marx, she sees the world and the self as being shaped by class relations, which are usually conflictive. 10. She refused to sell the Hebrew translation rights for her two latest novels.

### **D – Learn it! Use it!**

1. stuck 2. dismissed 3. cope 4. insight 5. store 6. trigger 7. features 8. boundary

### **E – Ready for the C1 ADVANCED English Test?**

1. are grieving the loss 2. there is an expectation 3. the way (that) he planned 4. something she continues to reflect on 5. what gives a character power is 6. a bourgeois point of view