



## Homage to Catalonia by George Orwell (B2 -Upper Intermediate)

### A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. What do you know about George Orwell?
2. Can you name any of his books?
3. Have you read any of them?

### B – Listen and answer

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

1. George Orwell was born in India. His father was
  - a) a police officer.
  - b) a miner.
  - c) an employee of the British government.
2. Orwell decided to become a journalist
  - a) after working in Burma.
  - b) before working in Burma.
  - c) after arriving in Spain.
3. In 1936, he arrived in Barcelona and joined the militia
  - a) after first working as a war correspondent.
  - b) nearly at once.
  - c) after several months.
4. He observed the system of social ownership he found in Barcelona with
  - a) admiration.
  - b) fear.
  - c) scepticism.
5. The soldiers of the militia he fought alongside in the trenches were
  - a) mostly young and untrained.
  - b) very scared.
  - c) poorly equipped.
6. At first, Orwell ... the political divisions among the Republicans.
  - a) was shocked by
  - b) was curious about
  - c) knew little or nothing about
7. On being hit by a bullet, he says he felt
  - a) intense pain.
  - b) a sensation similar to electrocution.
  - c) an explosion of anger.
8. The author of the article says Homage to Catalonia is more valid as
  - a) an account of personal experiences.
  - b) an accurate historical account.
  - c) a political analysis.

### C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. How had General Francisco Franco come to power in Spain?
2. What weakened the Republicans' ability to oppose General Franco?
3. Why was Orwell so struck by what he witnessed in Barcelona in 1936?
4. What two conditions did Orwell find most difficult to bear while fighting on the front?
5. How does he sum up his reasons for joining the militia?
6. What connection is there between Orwell's experiences in Spain and the political ideas contained in his later novels?

### 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. These instructions are very \_\_\_\_\_. They should be rewritten and made much clearer.
2. A nuclear \_\_\_\_\_ is a device that uses a nuclear reaction to create a powerful explosion.
3. James can't go to school today. He's got a sore \_\_\_\_\_ and a temperature.
4. Anne and her brother \_\_\_\_\_ last Christmas and they're still not speaking to each other.
5. A louse is a parasitic insect that lives on mammals and birds. The plural is \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Scientists \_\_\_\_\_ about climate change in 1965, but nothing was done.

### **E – Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English? (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 2 and 5 words including the word given.*

Example: Orwell worked as an imperial policeman in Burma.

SERVED Orwell served in the imperial police in Burma.

1. He joined the International Brigades, which were made up of 50,000 militia.

FORMED He became one of 50,000 militia \_\_\_\_\_ International Brigades.

2. He describes how he initially felt elated to join the fight against fascism.

ELATION He describes the \_\_\_\_\_ as he joined the fight against fascism.

3. Orwell was impressed by the decent, friendly and generous working classes of Spain.

DECENCY The \_\_\_\_\_ the Spanish working classes impressed Orwell.

4. His training only lasted for a few days before he was sent to fight on the front.

JUST After \_\_\_\_\_, he was sent to fight on the front.

5. The soldiers waited in a barn and there were rats all over the place.

ALIVE The soldiers waited in a barn and the place \_\_\_\_\_ rats.

6. Orwell says the Republican factions fought among themselves in the end.

UP Orwell says the Republican factions \_\_\_\_\_ other.

### **F – Write about it**

*Write about a popular book written by one of your country's most famous writers. Mention:*

- who wrote it;
  - when it was written;
  - whether it's fiction or non-fiction;
  - what it's about;
  - why it's popular.
-

## Answers: Homage to Catalonia by George Orwell

### B – Listen and answer

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

### C – Read and answer

1. He had led a coup against the democratically-elected government. 2. They were divided into many factions that quarrelled among themselves. 3. Because it was the first time he had ever been in a town where the working class was in control/in the saddle. 4. The intense cold and the rats. 5. He says he did so to fight against fascism and to fight for common decency. 6. The political ideas expressed in his later novels, which warn about the dangers of totalitarianism, were shaped by his civil war experiences in Spain.

### D – Learn it! Use it!

1. misleading 2. weapon 3. throat 4. quarrelled 5. lice 6. warned

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

1. that/which formed the 2. elation (that) he initially felt/elation (that) he felt initially  
3. decency, friendliness and generosity of 4. just a few days' training 5. was alive with  
6. ended up fighting each