

Unit 2 Progress Test A

Grammar

1 Choose the correct words to complete the sentences.

- 1 If you'd studied harder, you **would be** / **were** at a good university now.
- 2 **Not for one moment** / **Under no circumstances** should you let young children watch horror films meant for adults.
- 3 If we didn't have the internet, we **'d have to** / **had to** go to the library or a bookshop to find out information.
- 4 **Poured down** / **Down poured** the rain outside our window. We had no option but to stay inside all day.
- 5 If it **weren't** / **isn't** for my cold I'd come with you to the cinema, but I feel really awful.
- 6 **Such** / **So** surprised were readers by the ending of the novel that it received very mixed reviews.
- 7 Supposing you **could** / **can** live anywhere in the world, where would you choose to be?
- 8 My cousins **had visited** / **would have visited** us last weekend if there hadn't been a transport strike.
- 9 You **'d appreciate** / **appreciate** this film more if you'd read the book first.
- 10 **Neither** / **Not only** were you very late, but you didn't even apologise when you arrived!

Mark: ____ / 11

2 Choose the correct words to complete the book review.

Book club review: *The Lovely Bones*

¹ ____ the film first, I might have decided not to read *The Lovely Bones*, but I'm very glad that I did. ² ____ have I read a novel with such an intriguing plot. ³ ____ has the book begun than the main character, a young girl called Suzie Salmon, is brutally murdered. Suzie, the narrator of the story, is now dead, and this leaves the reader very curious about what will happen next. It turns an ordinary story into compelling reading.

⁴ ____ a dead person could look down on her family and see what they – and her murderer – were doing, how ⁵ ____ she feel? ⁶ ____ well-written is the book that you soon suspend your disbelief in this idea of a ghost narrator looking down from heaven, and just take it for granted.

⁷ ____ the book depressing, people wouldn't be raving about it like they are. In fact it turns out to be very uplifting, despite the grim description of a murder at the beginning. The book is full of suspense, and it also has a brilliant ending. Although you hope that the killer will pay for his crime in one way or another, ⁸ ____ do you suspect how this will unfold.

In short, *The Lovely Bones* is a brilliant book which I can definitely recommend. ⁹ ____ will I think of ghosts in the same way!

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 a Would I see | b Had I seen | c If I saw |
| 2 a In no way | b Neither | c Rarely |
| 3 a No sooner | b Not until | c As soon |
| 4 a Should | b Provided that | c Supposing |
| 5 a will | b would | c does |
| 6 a Such | b Not only | c So |
| 7 a Were | b Had | c Should |
| 8 a No longer | b Not for one moment | c Under no circumstances |
| 9 a Never | b Neither | c Not only |

Mark: ____ / 9

Vocabulary

3 Choose the correct words to complete the sentences.

- 1 The people portrayed in the novel are all _____ characters, and not clichés.
a mediocre b two-dimensional c well-rounded
- 2 An investigative journalist came round earlier. He was _____ for information.
a incognito b digging around c infiltrating
- 3 I found the novel too _____. You could easily see how it was going to end.
a fast-moving b predictable c evocative
- 4 The biography of New York Mafia boss John Gotti was interesting, but it contained some really _____ descriptions of murders.
a gruesome b gutsy c ethical
- 5 Our team won the match with a _____ goal.
a last-minute b make-up c world-famous
- 6 This room in the palace used to be one of the king's private _____.
a chambers b hues c garments
- 7 She looked hard at me and then spoke with a tone of _____ in her voice.
a gutsy b earnestness c revelation

Mark: ____ / 7

4 Match the words and phrases in the box to the definitions.

fable two-dimensional crackdown low-budget compelling mediocre

- 1 A short story which has a hidden meaning. _____
- 2 Stereotypical in its plot or characters. _____
- 3 Exciting and interesting – making you want to find out more. _____
- 4 When the police or the government try to stop something – often something illegal. _____
- 5 Not very good, or worse than average. _____
- 6 Made cheaply (for a film) _____

Mark: ____ / 6

5 Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

tend to ethics difference lightweight powerful warm up love interest breakdown storey in common

- 1 Always do a _____ before you go for a run – it helps to avoid injury.
- 2 It's a fun, _____ book – nothing too serious.
- 3 They've knocked down an old four-_____ building in town. They're going to build a skyscraper on the land.
- 4 Some people are worried about the _____ of using young actors in horror films.
- 5 They picked a fairly ordinary-looking person for the male _____, which is a nice change. After all, most people don't really fall in love with male models.
- 6 It was a very _____ film, which affected me a lot and really made me think.
- 7 It took us ages to get here because we had a _____. Someone had to come out and fix our car.

Mark: ____ / 7

Use of English

6 Complete the text with one word in each space. There may be more than one possible answer.

The photos are ¹ _____ in that they both show people writing or at some stage of the writing process. In the first photo there is a woman on her own, sitting on a bed and it ² _____ as if she's writing in a diary. It's a very private and individual activity and she seems so busy writing that she's unaware of her surroundings. In ³ _____ to photo 1, photo 2 ⁴ _____ a group of people around a table that has notebooks on it. It ⁵ _____ be a creative writing class because there are objects and photos on the table too, so I suspect the students have to write about them. In photo 2 they appear to be talking about their ideas for writing. On the ⁶ _____ hand, in photo 1 she is already putting her thoughts down on paper. The clearest ⁷ _____ between the photos is that in photo 1 there's an individual activity, ⁸ _____ in photo 2, there's collaboration and sharing as part of the writing process.

I think it's true to ⁹ _____ that most adults don't regularly write diaries these days, although creative writing classes are becoming more and more popular. I ¹⁰ _____ to think that writing just for ourselves can be just as important as writing for others. It gives us the opportunity to reflect on our feelings without having to worry about what other people think all the time.

Mark: ____ / 10

Listening

7 2 Listen to a journalist talking about two other journalists she admires. Complete each sentence with a word or short phrase.

- 1 The speaker says that going undercover can involve _____ and affect your psychology.
- 2 Doty thought she would be safe if she didn't _____ in prison.
- 3 Doty's book helped the campaign for _____, which changed conditions for prisoners.
- 4 Antonio Salas decided to go undercover after a _____ in Madrid.
- 5 In Venezuela, he met people from several _____ groups.

Mark: ____ / 5

Reading

8 Read about the *War Horse* and answer the questions.

- 1 Why were animals employed in large numbers during the First World War?
- 2 What potential problem does Michael Morpurgo avoid in the novel?
- 3 What problems in staging a play does the article mention?
- 4 In what way do film adaptations of novels often fail to live up to expectations?
- 5 What overall message do all the adaptations of *War Horse* convey?

Mark: ____ / 5

The many faces of *War Horse*

War Horse began its life as a best-selling novel and was then adapted into an award-winning stage play. In its final reincarnation it became a big-budget Hollywood film. Arts Editor Stephanie Palmer looks back on the phenomenal success of the War Horse franchise.

Author Michael Morpurgo's inspiration for *War Horse* was the largely-forgotten story of the horses taken to the battlefields during the First World War. Enduring the horrors of modern warfare alongside their human companions, they carried supplies to the front lines and helped to evacuate the wounded. The least fortunate were drafted into the cavalry and sent with their riders to face almost certain death – in pointless charges, swords drawn, straight towards machine guns. Rarely did war horses survive for long: of the one million horses that went to war, only 60,000 returned.

The novel

Michael Morpurgo's novel was originally written for teenagers, but is also avidly read by adults. It has become a modern classic – a runner-up for the Whitbread Award which has sold millions of copies worldwide. Like Jack London's epic tale *Call of the Wild*, the narrative in *War Horse* is told from the point of view of an animal: a farm horse called Joey who is sold to the army to become a cavalry horse. As the tale unfolds, not only does Joey witness the horrors of combat, but he also experiences both the cruelty and tenderness of the different people he meets.

The novel's characters are well-rounded and complex, allowing us to identify with them rather than judge, even when it comes to Albert's cruel father. Ultimately, the plot hinges on the relationship between Joey and the main human protagonist: a young boy called Albert who grew up with Joey. Albert goes on to enlist in the army, despite being under-age, in order to find and rescue Joey. Such a tale could have been far-fetched had a lesser author written it, but Morpurgo manages to make it entirely convincing.

Despite being for younger readers, the novel in no way avoids the gruesome realities of war. In this respect too it resembles *Call of the Wild*, which is also anything but sentimental. *War Horse* would be a less powerful novel if Morpurgo had hesitated to kill off some of his main characters. Instead he underlines the tragic cost of war by portraying the deaths of likeable characters such as warm-hearted Friedrich and Joey's companion, the horse Tophorn.

The play

In no way was it easy to adapt *War Horse* for the theatre, bearing in mind the need to recreate believable live horses and epic battles on a relatively small West-End stage. The solution to many problems was to use brilliantly-crafted puppets.

If the puppets' creators, the Handspring Puppet Company, had tried to imitate the look of real horses, they would probably have failed to impress. Instead their horses are wonderful moving sculptures, made of translucent fabric and a wooden frame. So brilliantly are the horses operated by their puppeteers that their movements are astonishingly believable and lifelike. No sooner has the play begun than you forget the puppets' lack of anatomical realism and fully embrace them as living, breathing animals.

The play skips some details in the novel, perhaps inevitably when changing the format to a two-act play. And unlike readers of the novel who see things through the horse's eyes, you are watching the action from the outside. Suddenly some of the coincidences in the plot seem a little harder to accept. Having said that, it is a truly great piece of theatre, and deserves both its popularity and multiple awards.

The film

Films adaptations of successful novels often disappoint partly because of Hollywood's tendency to jazz up the plot for the big screen, adding action, love interest and sweeter endings. Had Steven Spielberg gone too far down that road, the story would have lost its power. Instead, his adaptation successfully avoids the usual Hollywood clichés, despite significant changes to the original story. As well as solid, convincing performances by Jeremy Irvine, Emily Watson and Benedict Cumberbatch, the film is very cleverly structured. Even the opening scenes, which feature sweeping views of the unspoilt English countryside, have their place in the overall scheme of things. They serve as a striking contrast to the vision of hell which comes later: the corpse-littered, bomb-cratered fields at the front line.

Although there are some important differences between the book, play and film, it's fair to say that the spirit of *War Horse* remains resolutely the same. In whatever form it takes, *War Horse* is a poignant and compelling tale. And despite the tragedy portrayed – the senseless waste of human and animal life – Morpurgo manages to deliver a story of hope. We are left with the feeling that even in the chilling presence of death, love, loyalty and tenderness can prevail.

Mark: ____ / 5

Writing

- 9 Read the task below and write a film review (220–260 words). Remember to plan your paragraphs before beginning to write.**

Write a review of a film which was adapted from an original novel. Mention any important differences between the book and the film. State which you prefer, and why.

Mark: ____ / 10

Total: ____ / 70