



Reading comprehension

B2

A day in the life of Sophie: school and family

Sophie is a 16-year-old student from England. Read her diary and complete the exercises.

I like school but I am looking forward to going on to college. It has been quite difficult at my high school in Ludlow. Since it is a mixed state school, there are people from different backgrounds, both poorer than me and better off¹.

The way my group of friends came together has a lot to do with intelligence and like-mindedness². I have got one friend who is from a very different background from mine, but we get along well nevertheless³. He is incredibly nice. Just why he is so nice when his parents are as they are... is quite beyond me.

At school, my favourite subject is textiles. I would have said drama, but the drama lessons just seem to get out of control. There is a problem with discipline. It is far too easy to say it is the teachers' fault: discipline problems are too deep-rooted⁴ for an easy answer. But the pupils do not respect teachers, or each other. How do you get people to respect each other? I know how, because I have learned how at home, I suppose.

At home, there is mum, my sister Ellie, who is 14, and me. Mum and Dad split up years ago but we still see Dad a lot, especially for the holidays. Mum is obviously my main role model. But I really do not think I had to be taught right from wrong, since I have always known right from when I was little. I just know.

Of course, even though I grew up in a nice family, my home situation is not perfect and this sometimes affects my ability to concentrate at school. The cottage we live in is really pretty; it is right in the countryside, but it is too small. That is why we are looking for another place. My mother rents, because we cannot afford to buy. House prices are very expensive, wherever you go. At the moment, we fall over each other a bit and get on each other's nerves, and this does not help. Last night, I went to a dance at another school in the area. This morning, there were seven of us in the house: my girlfriends who had slept over, Ellie and Mum. When Mum tripped over⁵ the telephone wire, she picked up the telephone and threw it at us. Well, not quite, but she was obviously feeling a bit cramped⁶...

¹ ricche

² abbiamo gli stessi gusti

³ ciononostante

⁴ radicati

⁵ è inciampata

⁶ non aveva lo spazio per muoversi



Exercises

1) Read the text and tick the right answer.

1. Sophie thinks her school:
 - a) is a great place to be
 - b) can be difficult at times
 - c) is a very fun and relaxed place
2. During Sophie's drama classes, students:
 - a) behave well
 - b) respect each other and teachers
 - c) lack discipline
3. Sophie can respect other people mainly thanks to:
 - a) her parents
 - b) her teachers
 - c) her friends
4. We know that Sophie:
 - a) has got a huge family
 - b) has got a brother
 - c) has got divorced parents
5. The cottage where Sophie lives is:
 - a) very big
 - b) extremely expensive
 - c) in the countryside
6. Her mum does not buy a house because:
 - a) she likes renting
 - b) she does not have enough money
 - c) she does not want to move out
7. When Sophie is at home with her family:
 - a) she feels lonely
 - b) she would like a bigger place
 - c) she is bored
8. Sophie is a:
 - a) high school student
 - b) college student
 - c) teacher



2) Read the text and find a synonym for the following words/sentences.

- | | |
|------------------------|-------|
| 1. richer | _____ |
| 2. I cannot understand | _____ |
| 3. lack discipline | _____ |
| 4. responsibility | _____ |
| 5. simple | _____ |
| 6. divorced | _____ |
| 7. house | _____ |
| 8. fall | _____ |

3) Recreate the expressions in the text by matching a word from list A to a word from list B.

List A

- drama
- look
- like
- deep
- role
- pick
- mixed
- sleep

List B

- rooted
- state school
- up
- over
- lessons
- forward to
- mindedness
- model

4) Fill in the gaps with some of the expressions above. Make the necessary grammatical adjustments.

- In May I really _____ to going on holiday. I am usually so tired.
- Some prejudices are so _____ that people feel they are part of their lives.
- Excuse me, can you _____ the phone? It is for you.
- Who are your _____? Film stars, or your parents?
- Susan always attends her _____. She wants to become an actress.
- Lucy's friends _____ last night. It was a fun pyjama party!