

- ◆ Text Type
- ◆ Grammar Item

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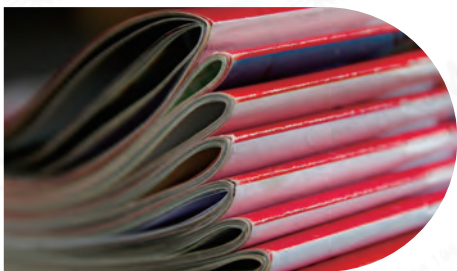


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A Quick Grasp

Listen!

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Revision 2



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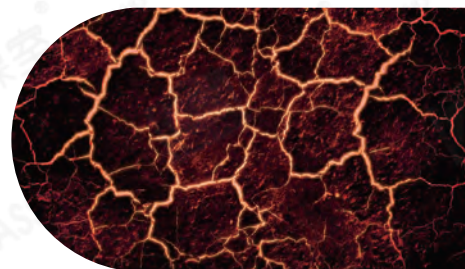
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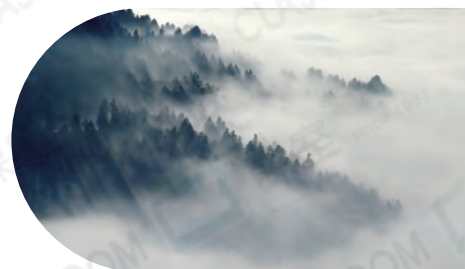
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With Teaching Videos

Reading Skill 1

Identifying main ideas and supporting details

You can understand the main idea of a paragraph by reading its topic sentence. A topic sentence is usually the first sentence of a paragraph. It carries the most important message in the paragraph. Note that there is not always a topic sentence in a paragraph.

Example 1

Numbers play an important role in Chinese culture. The number '8' is considered the luckiest number because its pronunciation is very similar to those of the Chinese words for 'prosperity' and 'wealth'. On the other hand, the number '4' and the Chinese word for 'death' sound nearly the same, so the Chinese would try to avoid using it. A typical example is that some buildings in China do not have the 4th, 14th or 24th floors.

From the topic sentence, we know that the main idea of the paragraph is about how certain numbers are perceived in Chinese culture. The rest of the paragraph gives examples, the numbers '8' and '4', to illustrate concretely the importance of numbers in Chinese culture.

Example 2

In Chinese culture, colours also carry symbolic meanings. Red is the dominant colour for celebratory occasions and festivities, such as weddings and Chinese New Year parties, since it represents happiness and luck. However, white symbolises death and is commonly seen at funerals. Therefore, it is inappropriate to wear white clothes on such festive, joyous occasions.

From the topic sentence, we know that the main idea of the paragraph is about the symbolic meanings of certain colours in Chinese culture. The rest of the paragraph gives examples, the colours 'red' and 'white', to provide more detailed information about the symbolic meanings carried by colours.



Let's Practice

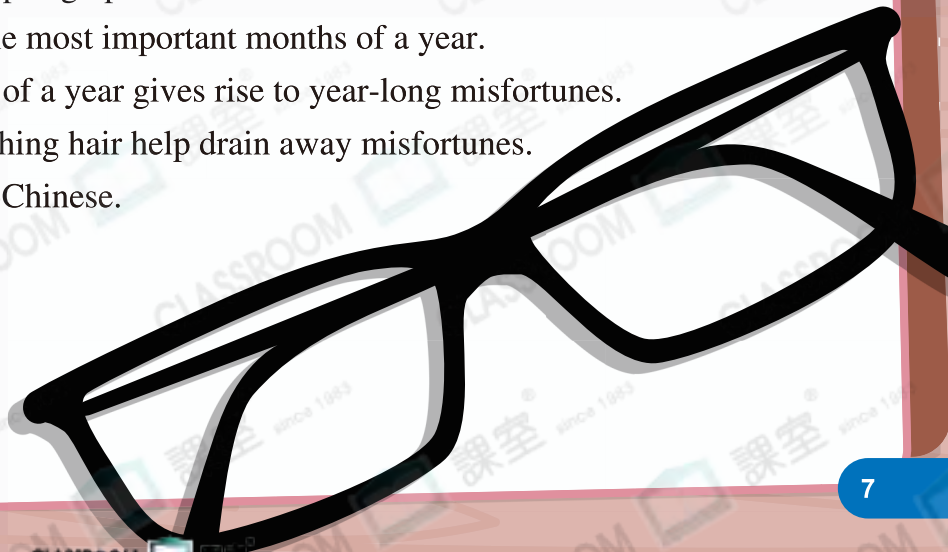
Choose the best answer by blackening the circle.

The essence of feng shui lies in the way people place things. Some Chinese believe that arranging objects in a certain way or pattern can bring them good fortune. Bamboo plants are said to be able to attract prosperity and better health while fish tanks are considered to be what invites wealth and abundance.

1. What is the main idea of the above paragraph?
 - ☐ A. Good feng shui means good wealth.
 - ☐ B. Plants and fish tanks are items essential to good feng shui.
 - ☐ C. Feng shui is the positioning of objects for good fortune.
 - ☐ D. Feng shui is exercised only in China.

The Chinese believe that what they do at the beginning of a year affects what may happen to them throughout the entire year, so they pay special attention to what not to do at Chinese New Year. For example, sweeping the floor and washing hair are considered taboos as they think by doing so, their good fortune will either be swept away or go down the drain together with the water. From the traditional Chinese perspective, it is wiser to obey these rules than to take risks.

2. What is the main idea of the above paragraph?
 - ☐ A. January and February are the most important months of a year.
 - ☐ B. Breaking taboos at the start of a year gives rise to year-long misfortunes.
 - ☐ C. Sweeping the floor and washing hair help drain away misfortunes.
 - ☐ D. Risk takers are usually non-Chinese.



1



Pixar

Listen!



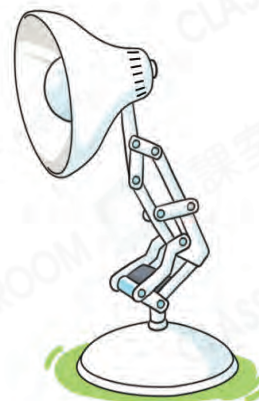
Let's Think

1. Have you ever watched any animations produced by Pixar?
2. Did you know Pixar developed its own 3D animation rendering software?

You are Heidi. You are reading an article about Pixar in a magazine.

PIXAR— the revolutionist of animations

Pixar might not be a familiar name to you, but I bet you must have heard of *Toy Story*, *Monsters University* or *Inside Out*. These are just some of the blockbusters produced by Pixar. Each of them has enjoyed a box office of more than 1 billion US dollars.



- 5 Pixar is a renowned motion-picture studio based in California in the US. It is highly acclaimed for its outstanding animation technology and expertise in creating stories for filmgoers of all ages. Before Pixar became part of The Walt Disney Company in 2006, Pixar was a corporation founded by computer scientists Edwin Catmull and Alvy Ray Smith in 1986, with Steve Jobs as the major shareholder. They were the pioneers that have given wings to creativity and revolutionised the creation of animated films.

10 With nine years of unrelenting effort, Pixar, in 1995, released *Toy Story*, the world's first computer-animated feature film. Praised for the technical innovation of the 3D animation, screenplay, music and excellent voice performances, *Toy Story* received three Academy Award nominations and remains one of the highest-grossing films in the US and worldwide. Following the footsteps of *Toy Story*, *Toy Story 2*, *Toy Story 3* and *Toy Story 4* achieved great success and made huge profits.



On top of great leaders and great productions, the in-house animation rendering software RenderMan is another factor in Pixar's success. Facing keen competition in the computer graphics and filmmaking industries, Pixar released the software for non-commercial use, including education, research, and personal projects. Pixar's generosity enables more amateur animation producers to start using this software to make quality images as great as Pixar's productions.

It is expected that Pixar is going to produce more and more motion pictures that continue to redefine the industry standard for animated films.

(286 words)

Part A

Answer the following questions using the information from the article. Choose the **BEST** answer and blacken **ONE** circle only.

1. Pixar became a company under Disney in _____ and *Toy Story* was one of its production in _____.

- ☐ A. 1986, 2006
- ☐ B. 1995, 2006
- ☐ C. 2006, 1995
- ☐ D. 2006, 1986

2. What is the possible box office gross of *Toy Story*?

- ☐ A. 1 million dollars
- ☐ B. 100 million dollars
- ☐ C. 1 billion dollars
- ☐ D. 1.06 billion dollars

3. Read line 11. What does the word 'released' mean?

released v.

- ☐ A. gave freedom to someone or something
- ☐ B. allowed something to be shown in public or to be available for use
- ☐ C. expressed a feeling that one has been trying not to show
- ☐ D. stopped holding something

4. Which of the following is **NOT TRUE** about Pixar?

- ☐ A. Pixar revolutionised the way animated films are created.
- ☐ B. Pixar makes animations of high quality.
- ☐ C. Pixar allowed the public to use their in-house software for free in non-commercial projects.
- ☐ D. Pixar sold its in-house software and made huge profits from it.

5. The writer is _____ about the future development of Pixar.

- ☐ A. hopeful
- ☐ B. worried
- ☐ C. uncertain
- ☐ D. joyful

Grammar Corner

We use the idiom '**on top of**' to mean 'in addition to'.

e.g. *On top of great leaders and great productions, the in-house animation rendering software RenderMan is another factor in Pixar's success.*
(Lines 17-18)

Pay attention to how Pixar's productions are described.