



Exercise 2

Read sections **A–D** of a magazine article about young seals in New Zealand. Then answer **Questions 7(a)–(i)**.

Young seals in New Zealand

A

In New Zealand, the seal breeding season lasts from May until December. It's a time when many young seals are born, and some then leave the groups that they have been raised in, and start to explore the area around them. They are young, they lack experience, and it's in their nature to explore. When this starts happening, the government actually releases an official public notice that seal season has begun, warning people that they might encounter higher numbers of young seals in human-dominated spaces. Busy roads are quite often affected: one year, a young seal blocked traffic on a highway at rush hour, as parents were trying to take their children to a local school. It's not uncommon to see seals relaxing in such places, and it's also not surprising that people are often concerned if they come across a young seal there.

B

Local people refer to this time of year as the seal silly season, because of all the unusual and unexpected places that seals have been known to turn up in. One young seal broke into a house, and spent several hours on the sofa before it was discovered and led back to the sea. According to one wildlife specialist, this sort of behaviour is similar to that of a teenager away from home – they don't quite know what to do with themselves, so they go exploring. For example, in 2021, a seal spent more than a week occupying the outdoor film set which had been used to make the well-known *Lord of the Rings* series. Tourists visiting the film set were entertained by the seal playing in the lake, and tour guides quickly made it part of their script.

C

Each year, scientists from the government's Department of Conservation warn people that young seals can behave strangely when they are in an unfamiliar setting. They might appear to be lost or having difficulty moving, but they are usually able to find their way back to the sea. Therefore, when people spot them, they should be left alone unless they are in immediate danger. Fortunately, the majority of seals will remain on or near the beaches where they were born, but some are much bolder. Even though movement on land might look awkward, seals can actually travel long distances – in fact, some have even been known to end up more than eighty kilometres away from the shore. The middle of a road is somewhere that frequently attracts seals, as its black surface absorbs heat during the day, so it becomes a nice warm place for them to rest.

D

Advisers to the government report that the sight of so many seals each year is welcome. The species was in decline until the 1940s because they were hunted, mostly for their fur. These days, seals are legally protected in New Zealand, and the population is steadily increasing. The issue is that the human population has also increased, so seals are coming into contact with people much more frequently. Seals have been spotted in people's gardens, on golf courses, and have even approached a football pitch while a match was in progress. And even though seal season takes place every year, and people have become familiar with the event, the Department of Conservation typically receives an enormous number of calls about seals turning up in odd places. However, the majority of these seals find their own way back to the beaches where they came from.



Question 7

Which section includes the following information?

- (a) an informal name for an annual event [1]
- (b) why one type of location is particularly appealing to seals [1]
- (c) several reasons why young seals tend to wander [1]
- (d) a comparison between young seals and young people [1]
- (e) the suggestion that more people report seeing seals than necessary [1]
- (f) how people tend to feel when they see a young seal away from the beach [1]
- (g) advice about what to do with a young seal on land [1]
- (h) why researchers are pleased to see large numbers of seals in the area [1]
- (i) a particular incident that negatively affected a large number of people [1]

[Total: 9]

