



Exercise 2

Read the article about four young people (**A–D**) who write their own songs. Then answer **Questions 7(a)–(i)**.

Four young songwriters

A Hideko

I've written songs for about two years. I'm in a band with three other members, who write songs too, but we tend to be more creative when we work independently than when working together. At band practice, the person who's written the song plays it to the others and teaches them the structure and notes. My songs almost always start with the lyrics – I'm not quite sure why – and then I think of a tune for both them and the guitars. I used to just wait for inspiration to arrive when I was younger, hoping that if I went for a walk in the fields near my home, ideas would arrive. This method was far from successful though, as I couldn't use most of what came into my head, so now I have fixed times during the week when I write, which is a pretty unusual approach.

B Dimitri

My songs are quite varied, with some being fast and loud and others quiet and slow. What they all have in common, however, is that the idea for the song most probably formed while I was watching a wildlife documentary or seeing an astonishing landscape. This may seem a bit odd, but at least I know what to do if I suddenly can't think of anything to write about. My songs always progress in the same way, with that first moment of creativity providing me with the beginnings of a tune, which I'll then add words to and develop into something that sounds like a song. Following this, I'll use my laptop to record myself singing the tune, so I don't forget it. I find it exhausting, but once I've got my energy back, I'll then have the courage to play the song to others, to see what they think.

C Marie-Laure

I've been writing songs for a long time now. Musically, I'm into everything from jazz to rock to hip-hop – and what I find amusing is to re-record a piece I've written in each of the styles I love. I wish I could report that truly important things like the environment and nature are what give me the majority of my ideas for songs, but it's more often something trivial, like a story I've read about in the local newspaper. The software I use for composing songs is absolutely wonderful and has meant that I've never needed to learn an instrument. Ideas tend to flow more readily if there's a group of us working on a song together, so I can't call many of my compositions truly my own. I hope I never get tired of creating songs, as it's something I'd like to develop into a career.

D Hassan

My early attempts at writing songs were all produced using a special program on my parents' computer. There was something unsatisfactory about that, though, so I decided to learn to play the piano and soon became good enough to create music on it. I'm not the most confident songwriter, so whenever some lyrics or a tune come into my head which I think might one day be used in a song, I always ask a few friends whether they think it's worth continuing with them. I hate giving up the ones they don't like, as experience has taught me that it might be several months before the next inspiration comes. Many musicians record their own songs in several different ways – I can't say that's ever been my thing, though, and I rarely get tired of hearing or playing my songs in the form they were originally written.



Question 7

Which person ...

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| (a) gets their greatest inspiration from nature? | | [1] |
| (b) has phases when ideas for songs disappear? | | [1] |
| (c) has included writing songs in their regular routine? | | [1] |
| (d) writes best when they're with other people? | | [1] |
| (e) usually writes the words before the music? | | [1] |
| (f) makes several different versions of the same song? | | [1] |
| (g) feels tired after spending time working on a song? | | [1] |
| (h) shares their initial ideas before developing them? | | [1] |
| (i) creates their work entirely on a computer? | | [1] |

[Total: 9]

