

Exercise 2

Read the article about four young female actors (**A–D**) who perform in a play in a famous London theatre. Then answer **Question 7(a)–(i)**.

Young actors

Four young female actors share their thoughts on acting and how it affects their lives

A Ayesha

I've been performing in this show for three months now. I really only got the role by accident. My friend wanted to be in it but was nervous about going to the auditions on her own, so I said I'd keep her company. Unfortunately for her, I got the part, and she didn't – we're still friends, though! I really enjoyed acting at school, but this is my first paid work. I still can't believe it. Before I started, I loved hearing about the strange and interesting people working in theatre. Everyone said, 'Oh, they're probably really boring in reality.' I'm glad to report that actors really are 'different'. They're also the most generous people you'll meet, especially when it comes to helping new actors. Thanks to them saying things like 'maybe you should try this' or 'have you thought about that?', I'm a better actor by far than I was.

B Lisa

I joined the show two months ago. I'm only on stage for about an hour a day, but when I first started, I couldn't believe how exhausted I felt afterwards. It's been a fantastic experience, though, and I've learned loads. Whatever their reputation might be, actors are fun and very encouraging. I could easily get suggestions for improving my performances, but I've always tried to follow my own feelings. Other aspects have been less positive. I always thought people went to the theatre to watch the play, but all too often, they'll do things like make phone calls, talk loudly, film the show and even have picnics. It never ceases to amaze me! I know acting's not great in terms of career security, but I love it. As for the future, my only real plan is to go to college. After that, I might consider a return to the stage.

C Yuko

I've really enjoyed being in this show. As a result, I want to stay in the theatre. I find myself increasingly interested in costume design, though. That's more where I see myself working in the future, rather than acting. That might be because performing on stage, even in front of hundreds of people, seems no different to school drama classes. It's just a bit of fun, and it's hard to believe some people get paid a fortune to do it. My friends certainly think – wrongly – that I am. That's probably why they're always asking me to help them get into acting. Sadly, I don't have that much influence! I'm glad it hasn't affected our friendships. It reminds me there's a life outside acting – and acting certainly does take up a lot of time. With all my schoolwork and sports – I play lots of tennis – I'm always busy. Luckily, that's not a problem for me!

D Ara

Although I love being in this show, I'm not one of those people who give every moment to their acting. Because I'm so young, I can only work three nights a week – I share the role with other people. That's much less demanding than professional actors' jobs but doesn't stop me getting stressed about trying to fit in homework and a social life with all the rehearsals and shows I do. So far at least, all my friends are still there for me, and I still get to do 'normal' teenage things. It can be easy, especially after a tough performance, to tell yourself you're too tired to meet friends. It all depends on the people watching the play. If everything goes well, their reaction can be a real boost to us all; if it doesn't, there's nothing worse than a silent theatre.



Question 7

Which person ...

- (a) suggests that a long-term career on stage is unlikely? [1]
- (b) mentions the physical demands of acting on stage? [1]
- (c) finds it a challenge to balance performing with other commitments? [1]
- (d) was pleased to find that actors are exactly as she imagined? [1]
- (e) is frequently shocked by the behaviour of audiences? [1]
- (f) became an actor as a result of trying to help someone else? [1]
- (g) emphasises the importance to actors of a satisfied audience? [1]
- (h) has benefited from the advice of more experienced actors? [1]
- (i) finds it hard to take acting seriously? [1]

[Total: 9]

