

READING COMPREHENSION

Read the text carefully and then complete the task on the next page.

Defining the Commonwealth

1 In his first Commonwealth Day address, Charles hailed the “extraordinary potential” of the Commonwealth and its population of 2.6 billion people. But how to achieve that potential? It was once said that the sun never set on the British Empire. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, its territories covered about a quarter of the globe. It was the largest empire in history. At any time of day, the sun would be high in the sky somewhere in the Empire. However, with world war and the rise of nationalism came calls for independence from the empire’s colonies.

2 The Balfour Declaration of 1926 was an attempt to stem the tide, to retain Britain’s global power and trade links. The declaration created a “separate and equal” status for the dominions of the British Empire, “freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations” and “united by a common allegiance to the Crown”. The monarchy’s dominant role in the Commonwealth remains problematic. The 1949 London Declaration by Commonwealth prime ministers created the position of Head of the Commonwealth. It dropped the word “British” from the name of the organization but recognized King George VI as its head. Although this is not a hereditary role, Queen Elizabeth II succeeded her father as Head of the Commonwealth and led it for more than 70 years. After her death, King Charles III took his mother’s place as its head.

3 Known as the “family of nations”, the Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 56 countries, mostly former colonies of the British Empire, including 33 small states. But what does it do? According to the Commonwealth itself, shared goals include prosperity, democracy, and peace. The Commonwealth Secretariat, which carries out much of the work, aims to protect the environment, boost trade, support democracy, develop society, and assist small states. David Lawrence, a research fellow at Chatham House, a UK think-tank for international affairs, believes that the Commonwealth “suffers from an unclear purpose”. Successive UK governments, he says, have also remained unclear as to whether the Commonwealth is a trading bloc or a source of labour for its economy.

4 The 2012 Commonwealth Charter sets out the values of the organization, including human rights and the rule of law. Much is made of these shared values, but Lawrence believes that the Commonwealth should not seek commonality where none exists (for example, the invasion of Ukraine or conflict in the Middle East). Lord Howell, with many years of experience in parliament and Commonwealth affairs, agrees. He emphasizes that new technology, superfast connections, and global networks, especially for business, are more important than the slow-moving wheels of inter-state relations and diplomacy.

5 On average, it is 19 per cent cheaper for Commonwealth countries to export to other member nations. Yet, UK trade with the Commonwealth was only 8.9 per cent of total trade in 2023, about the same as UK trade with Germany. India, the Commonwealth’s most populous nation, is the UK’s 12th-largest trading partner but accounts for only 2.1 per cent of total UK trade. The Commonwealth remains central to the British royal family’s interests abroad. Jamaica is proceeding with plans to leave the monarchy, while Belize and Antigua & Barbuda have both said they intend to do the same. Barbados became a republic in 2021 but remains a Commonwealth member. Fifteen Commonwealth nations still have the British monarch as their head of state, five have their own monarch, and 36 are republics.

READING COMPREHENSION
(continued)

6 As if to signal that the Commonwealth is moving towards a different future, the four most recent members to join – Mozambique (1995), Rwanda (2009), Gabon, and Togo (both in 2022) – have no historic ties with Britain. More applications from countries without links to the British Empire or monarchy are in the pipeline. Why do they join? According to the BBC, new members seek economic development in a global network and trade alliance where English is key as the “language of business, science and international politics”.

Source: Spotlight 1/2024, pages 27-29 (adapted)

Task: *Based on what you have read in the article, decide whether the following statements are true or false. In the gaps provided, underline one of the letters (T/F) AND fill in the number of the paragraph in which you have found the evidence. The statements do not follow in the same order as the information appears in the article.*

1. T / F / According to Lawrence, the aim of the Commonwealth has remained vague.
2. T / F / It seems that the trade activities between the Commonwealth countries and the U.K. have not been very intense in the recent period.
3. T / F / According to another expert on the Commonwealth, preserving excellent diplomatic contacts among the Commonwealth countries should be essential.
4. T / F / The major reasons why some countries have entered the Commonwealth recently seem to be economic prospects and the status of English as a lingua franca.
5. T / F / In the official document, the dominions of the British Empire acknowledge their loyalty to the monarch.
6. T / F / If a Commonwealth country has become a republic, it is not eligible to be a member of the Commonwealth.
7. T / F / Membership in the Commonwealth is discretionary for each country involved.
8. T / F / All Commonwealth countries have historical bonds with Great Britain.
9. T / F / The position of the Head of the Commonwealth is held by inheritance.
10. T / F / Lawrence thinks that members of the Commonwealth should share the same attributes and approaches.

..... / 10 pts

V O C A B U L A R Y

Task 1: *In the text below, decide which word (a, b, c, or d) best fits the gap. Then underline the correct word or phrase.*

Alfred Hitchcock

The film director Alfred Hitchcock always insisted that he didn't care about the (1) matter of his films, or about the acting, but that he did care about the photography, soundtrack, and all the technical ingredients. For Hitchcock, it wasn't a message that (2) the audience, nor was it a great performance. He believed that people are aroused by pure film, (3) of their cultural background.

- | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. (a) content | (b) theme | (c) subject | (d) topic |
| 2. (a) triggered | (b) stirred | (c) sparked | (d) raised |
| 3. (a) irrespective | (b) irrelevant | (c) unrelated | (d) inconsiderate |

..... / 3 pts

Task 2: *Fill each blank space in the article below with the correct form of the word in capital letters.*

Pop-culture astrologer

In 2015, I moved to Los Angeles to work in film. Suddenly, my career in astrology blew up because my predictions were going (4). I was **VIRUS** working with celebrities; magazines were hiring me. Astrology isn't a science. It's not a form of (5). It's an art form. Astrology is **SPIRIT** (6), but I also feel that it can produce a lot because if **PREDICT** we're working with the currents of the universe, we can (7) **MAXIMUM** our potential and get more of what the universe has to offer. Some clients come to me for a yearly (8), while others consult me more **VIEW** frequently. I also have clients who are having a crisis and need some (9). We make decisions and plans and strategies based **GUIDE** on planetary (10). **ALIGN**

..... / 7 pts

..... / 10 pts

GRAMMAR

Task 1: Fill each of the numbered blanks in the passage with one suitable word, which has only a grammatical function in the text.

The Flexibility and Variety of English

EXAMPLE: (0) a

English as (0) _____ common language (1) _____ connects and separates many cultures – even (2) _____ one country. (3) _____ its core, English is the same language all over the world. (4) _____, there are just so many ways of saying the same thing. English vocabulary exceeds 600,000 words, a statistic that (5) _____ strike fear into the hearts of every student of the language. If learning a new language isn't hard (6) _____ already, students of English must also contend (7) _____ many different expressions for the same thing, depending on the region they're in.

How is anyone supposed to master a tongue (8) _____ has more than 30 names alone for a woodhouse? The flexibility and variety of English (9) _____ helped (10) _____ literature to succeed. Perhaps more than (11) _____, it's the comedic possibilities of English that stand (12) _____ when compared with many other languages.

..... / 12 pts

Task 2: Finish each of the following sentences in such a way that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. You must use between three and seven words, including the word given.

13. Do phone us when you arrive at the airport, even if it is late. **how**

No it is when you arrive at the airport, do phone us.

14. Do you mind if I watch while you paint this picture? **objection**

Do you you while you paint this picture?

15. The president only made his announcement after the publication of the leaked information. **did**

Not until the leaked information
..... his formal announcement.

..... / 3 pts

..... /15 pts

LISTENING**SOPHIE McALOONE – FINE-ART RESTORER**

You will hear Sophie McAloone, a fine-art restorer who brings art to life. Fill in the missing words in the sentences below which summarize her experience. Use only the words you have heard, or words derived from them. (The number of missing words is given in brackets.)

1. Besides paintings, furniture, and different objects, Sophie also brings back to life. (1 word)
2. Sophie's work includes working on old paintings and restoring as well. (2 words)
3. To restore the paint loss, Sophie has to use specialist resins and (2 words)
4. Sophie mentions the case of an old painting which had to be treated in a special way. (1 word)
5. To identify the original paint layer, Sophie and her colleagues had to apply UV photography and (1 word)
6. For Sophie's job, artistic and skills are required. (1 word)
7. To repair tears in art works, Sophie has to weave the and use some (2 words)
8. An *Optivisor* is a piece of headgear Sophie uses when needed. (1 word)
9. Sophie cooperates with companies as well. (1 word)
10. Water can do severe harm to paintings, spanning from to (2 words)

..... / 5 pts

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Olympiáda v anglickom jazyku – celoštátne kolo 2024/2025

Vydal: NIVAM – Národný inštitút vzdelávania a mládeže, Bratislava 2025