The exhibition

It was on a dismal, rainy Sunday afternoon in a local art gallery that I learned how a conscious attempt at art appreciation can, at times, render one unaware of simple, gentle things. 1. __H___ Some rather good local artists exhibited their works there, and this was a particularly fine collection, one of the most diverse exhibitions the gallery had ever hosted. 2._____

Pearl-draped elderly women, reeking of perfume, promenaded the halls, at times speaking of art, at times of their bridge games. On the wall, an extravagant ballroom scene hung, displaying aristocratic beauties in flowing silk gowns. Long-haired men and sandal-footed women, with children clinging to their hips, nodded appreciatively at the contemporary selections. Above them, bold brush strokes and shapeless forms brought an artist’s thunderstorm to life. On a pillar hung a solitary painting of stern-faced Dutchmen, staring down from their austere meeting room. 3._____

Thus, I followed that day, hoping to learn something about art appreciation. I studied each canvas intently, trying hard to comprehend what genius there was behind the bold, blue streak transecting the yellow circle and to understand why my favorite ocean scene was unimaginative. By the time I reached the end of the fourth hall, I no longer knew what I liked and disliked, and, perhaps, I didn’t care.

But as I turned the corner, there appeared a small child, a girl of about six, crouched near one of the walls, playing quietly. The rain had decreased to a drizzle, and the sun had come out. The window opposite her was dotted with tiny raindrops, and each prismatic one refracted the sunlight and sent dancing, rainbow-colored lights bouncing on the gallery wall. Each clinging drop moved quickly when struck by falling drizzle, and the light on the wall darted out, then back. 4._____

The heavier drops crept down the window pane, pulling others within, until their combined weight became so great that they would race down the glass. On the wall, small rainbows scurried and darted, changing speeds, changing shapes. 5._____

They didn’t notice the child or the lights, nor did the child notice them. She was holding out a small hand watching the speckles of color move down a finger, up a thumb, across her palm. She removed her hat and tried to catch a rainbow inside. She twisted her head sideways and upside down to see the colors from another angle. Her eyes gleamed like the lights. Such innocence was in this child. She didn’t know how the brush danced in the hand of the artist, only how the colors danced on the wall.

The crowd of connoisseurs could still be heard. “Look at this one! The colors seem alive! The artist has such imagination!” 6._____

And so she remained until, having been located by her mother, she was quickly rushed away to look at paintings, the reason for which she had been brought to the gallery.

If I could paint, I would have painted those rainbow lights, that child, the wall. I would have permanently preserved the lively exhibition of colored lights that dwarfed great works of art in one young mind. And I would hang that canvas in that very same gallery for the art
connoisseurs, for the sandal-footed mothers, for the perfumed bridge players, and especially for the little girl, that she might never let sophistication in art appreciation prevent her from seeing unsophisticated beauty.

A. Although I’m no art expert, I can pretty well tell a good picture from a poor one, by simply following the artist’s train of thought.

B. It also drew a very diverse crowd, and as I strolled through the spacious halls, I alternately focused my attention on patrons and paintings.

C. The entranced child didn’t look; her fingers merely traced circles around the tiny specks of color on the wall.

D. This gallery was a popular meeting place and therefore attracted many people.

E. The group I had been following moved further down the hall, praising a nearby painting – “Such color! Such form! Such movement!”

F. Some droplets sent out tiny armlike appendages that touched others, and the rainbow colors kissed and parted.

G. On hearing that, the child too felt obliged to admire the paintings.

H. A large exhibition was being presented, and the gallery was crowded.

I. Now, I don’t profess to know anything about painting, so I like to follow close behind those who do.
TEKST B

Po uważnym przeczytaniu tekstu zakreśl prawidłową odpowiedź (A; B; C; D) przy każdym zdaniu, a następnie wpisz zakreśloną literę do tabelki umieszczonej na arkuszu egzaminacyjnym. Pamiętaj, że dla każdego zadania przewidziano tylko jedno prawidłowe rozwiązanie. Przed przeczytaniem tekstu warto zapoznać się z pytaniami.

Britain’s royal castles and palaces

Windsor Castle
Windsor Castle towers most impressively over the surrounding countryside – one of the best views of it is from the A332 from the south. The present castle was started by William the Conqueror in the 11th century. In the 14th century, Edward III extended it, adding the famous round tower, but it was George IV who transformed it into the fortified palace you can see today – the largest inhabited castle in the world.

Windsor Castle is another of the Queen’s official residences and has become a sort of weekend retreat for the royal family. There was a devastating fire in part of the castle in 1992, but an enormous restoration project resulted in it all reopening in 1997, possibly even finer than before.

The beautiful St George’s Chapel is the burial place of 10 sovereigns and held the wedding of Prince Edward and Sophie Rhys-Jones in June 1999. The state apartments are furnished with treasures from the Royal Collection including paintings by Canaletto, Rubens, and Van Dyck. St George’s Hall, completely restored following the fire of 1992, now has the largest hammer-beam roof built in the 20th century.

Sandringham House
Sandringham, in Norfolk, is where the royal family spends Christmas and other holidays. The original Georgian house was rebuilt in 1870 by the Prince and the Princess of Wales, later King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra. Alexandra stamped her personality on the house and made it a charming home, once described as the most comfortable house in England. It suffered a major conflagration in 1891, but afterwards was enlarged to accommodate the Prince of Wales’ growing family.

The house is open to the public when the royal family are not in residence. The ground-floor rooms, which you can visit, still retain much of the Edwardian atmosphere. Queen Alexandra and Queen Mary after her were great art collectors and there is a fine collection of porcelain, jade and crystal oriental figures displayed. There is also a museum with displays of Royal life and Estate history, and Sandringham Country Park, open free all year, has a visitors centre and a restaurant.

The Palace of Holyroodhouse
The Queen’s official residence in Scotland, the Palace of Holyroodhouse, now a busy working palace, with state events, an annual investiture and garden parties, has quite a colourful history. The impressive building, at the end of the Royal Mile in Edinburgh, includes a chamber in which in 1566, David Rizzio, secretary to Mary Queen of Scots, was killed by a jealous Lord Darnley, Mary’s second husband.

The palace was founded as a monastery in 1128. Once Edinburgh became Scotland’s capital, the kings lived in Holyroodhouse instead of the bleak castle overlooking the town. In 1501, James IV built a palace near Abbey, his successor, James V added a massive tower, and
later, Mary Queen of Scots came home here to Scotland after the death of her young husband, Francis II of France. It was here she spent most of her turbulent life.

The building you see today is largely down to Charles II, who ordered the house rebuilt in the style of the French king, Louis XIV. Classical facades were built round a central quadrangle, a new apartment added, the Abbey Church was made into the Chapel Royal and new accommodation on the second floor created for the royal court. In the 18th century the house fell in neglect, but was restored by George IV, who initiated a programme of repair in 1822. Later, King George V and Queen Mary carried out further renovations on the place, which they regarded as a family home, installing bathrooms, electricity and lifts and bringing it into the 20th century.

Althorp
In the heart of Northamptonshire is Althorp, the ancestral home to 19 generations of the Spencer family. Here on a tiny island in the middle of a lake, is the final resting place of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Diana and her two elder sisters, Sarah and Jane, and younger brother Charles, moved into Althorp on the death of her grandfather, the 7th Earl Spencer. The house was originally a modest red-brick Tudor house built in 1508. It was enlarged in the 1600s, then remodelled again in 1790 by Henry Holland, who encased the building in grey tiles.

Sixteen rooms are open to the public, full of paintings by Van Dyck, Rubens and Reynolds. A converted 18th-century stable block includes six rooms of an exhibition on the life and work of Diana, with audio-visual displays and exhibits including that famous bridal gown seen on television screens around the world.

1. Which estate/ estates is/ are reminiscent of the royal weddings?
   A. Windsor Castle
   B. the Palace of Holyroodhouse and Windsor Castle
   C. Windsor Castle and Althorp
   D. Sandringham House and Windsor Castle

2. Which royal residence is world famous for its size?
   A. Windsor Castle
   B. Sandringham House
   C. the Palace of Holyroodhouse
   D. Althorp

3. Which residence/ residences has/ have been damaged by fire?
   A. Windsor Castle and the Palace of Holyroodhouse
   B. Windsor Castle and Sandringham House
   C. Windsor Castle
   D. the Palace of Holyroodhouse

4. Which building used to belong to the Church?
   A. Windsor Castle
   B. the Palace of Holyroodhouse
   C. Althorp
   D. Sandringham House

5. Which estate/ estates is/ are regularly used for official ceremonies?
   A. all of them
   B. Windsor Castle, Sandringham House and the Palace of Holyroodhouse
   C. Windsor Castle and Sandringham House
   D. the Palace of Holyroodhouse