

Focus On Reading (My Worst Job)  
Grade 11 English

**Exercise 1**

**1. Read the four texts A-D and then answer questions 1-4. Write the correct answer A, B, C, or D in each case. Which of the jobs involved:**

1. Working in a factory?
2. Working in a market?
3. Being a salesman
4. Dealing in scrap metal?

A

**Nadine Theron, 32**

*Physiotherapist, Johannesburg, South Africa*

When I was 15 I used to have to get up at 5 a.m. and go out on a horse-drawn cart, searching our neighbourhood for people who were throwing away tins, pans and anything else made of metal that could be recycled. We lived in a poor northern shanty town on the outskirts of the city and times were very hard. To make a living we had to collect every bit of scrap metal we could, which we then sold to a factory, who paid a few cents for every kilo. I had to sit on the cart while my father pulled the mule along, and I had to shout out non-stop 'We're buying tins, pots and pans'. There were days when we had to spend hours going through dark alleys to collect enough scrap metal to make even the small amount of money we needed to buy that day's food.



B

**Tanja Lindberg, 46**

*Diplomat, Helsinki, Finland*

I was 17 years old and keen to improve both my money situation and my German, so I got a job packing eggs in Lower Saxony for two months. I was there with a friend, which certainly helped, but the really difficult thing was the 6 a.m. start and the subsequent ten-hour day, standing at an assembly line packing eggs into boxes of six or ten. Occasionally, when eggs were out of date or unsold, they were returned to the plant and I would get egg-breaking duty. This involved me standing next to a big metal industrial vat throwing in all these rotten eggs. The smell was absolutely terrible. I had done some agricultural work before, when I was very young – picking out turnips which were too small to be sold. Packing eggs was much, much worse, and for once I was grateful when I went back to school after the holidays.



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C

**Koshi Domoto, 39**

*Data Analyst, Tokyo, Japan*

I was 18 when I opted out of going to college and started working as a cleaner or 'sanitary worker' in the Tsukiji fish market in Tokyo. My job involved cleaning the area where fish, like tuna, are cut up and auctioned each day. To the outsider, the market is an extremely interesting place because most of Tokyo's fish and sushi are obtained from here, but my memories of my time at Tsukiji are terrible. The smell of fish never seemed to leave my body. The Japanese are generally tolerant people but my family decided that I smelt so bad that I would have to move to the back room of our house, which got very cold in wintertime. Around that time I met a girl who I loved and wanted to marry, but she could not bear the thought of being married to a fish market cleaner. After a while I found a job as a trainee fishmonger preparing fish for sushi chefs, so things got better. I subsequently studied for a degree at night school and now work for a financial services company. Life is altogether better and I now have some prospects for the future.



D

**Chen Liang, 22**

*Waiter, Shanghai, China*

Earlier this year I worked as a sales representative for a transportation company. My work started at 8.30 a.m. and I was expected to spend the whole day travelling around visiting different businesses and trying to convince them to use our transportation services. The only problem was that I was very inexperienced and young, and nobody knew who I was in the companies I visited. Consequently, I would spend whole days without getting any business. I did not enjoy returning to my office at the end of the day, as the boss would give me a hard time. Like any boss he wants to make money and my failures made him pretty unhappy.



**Exercise 2**

***Give brief answers to these questions.***

1. Which country does Tanja Lindberg come from?
2. What is Nadine Theron's present job?
3. Who is the youngest of the four?
4. How did Nadine Theron travel around while she was working?
5. What was Koshi Domoto's first job?
6. Which language did Tanja Lindberg want to practice?
7. What time did Chen Liang begin work?
8. How long was Tanja Lindberg's working day?

**Exercise 3**

***Read the four texts above more carefully to answer these questions.***

1. Who mentions unpleasant smells in the job they did?
2. Who needed to travel as part of their work?
3. Who worked with a friend?
4. Who worked with a member of their family?
5. Who was often unsuccessful in their work?
6. Who lived at home while they were working?
7. Who describes starting work early in the morning as hard?
8. Who mentioned their present career?
9. Who was the youngest at the time of the job they described?
10. Who mentions they had worked before the job they described?