

TEST 2 PAPER 1: READING Part 2 (questions 9-15)

Part 2

You are going to read an article in which stage manager Adam James talks about his work in technical theatre. Seven sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A-H** the one which fits each gap (9-15). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

Technical Theatre

When we go to the theatre we go to see the actors and their performance; the stage is the central focus point; it is where everything happens, or at least everything that we the audience are supposed to see. But there is so much more to putting on a performance than just the acting cast. There is a whole team of people who we never see but without whom no production would be possible. We spoke to Adam James who has worked in technical theatre since the age of 14 to find out what goes on behind the scenes and how he got involved.

I was 12 years old when I first saw a show in my local leisure centre. I was fascinated by the fact that everything came in about ten lorries and they basically built a theatre from scratch. 9 I got to know some of the people working on the stage management team and they let me shadow them while they worked. I met the stage manager and after watching the team work and talking to him I decided that was what I wanted to do as a job. I didn't know anything about work in the theatre industry so I started studying and learning about the job. 10 However, what I really wanted was to get involved and start working as part of a stage management team. Once I was 14 I managed to get some work experience and I started to miss school sometimes and go to work at the theatre instead.

I left school when I was 16 and because I had quite a lot of experience I was able to get a job as an assistant stage manager in a theatre in London. I worked there for about a year and then did some freelance work in Cornwall and went on tours around the country. 11 Working

on tour was intense but really good fun. A typical Monday would see us arrive at about 8 o'clock in the morning and open up the lorries. We would have some coffee and then when everyone had arrived we would spend the day building the show. In the afternoon the cast would arrive and I would show them around so they knew where they could make quick costume changes and things like that. 12 Once the show had started it was just a case of watching and supervising and letting the show happen around us. As stage manager I was always the first and the last person on stage. Working on tour can be stressful as you have to keep track of where everyone is for health and safety reasons and monitor everything that goes on back stage and keep to time. Then once the show is over you have to check everything and make a note of everything that needs repairing or re-doing before the next performance.

After a couple of years touring I decided to return to London and go to college to study technical theatre. I studied for a year but I realised that it wasn't very useful to me. I had learnt a lot more from my years working. 13 I felt like I was already established in the industry so I decided to leave college and got a job in a theatre. When finding work in technical theatre first hand experience is much more important than qualifications. 14 I did some more freelance work in London for a while and now I work for a production company.

You can have up to 20 people working on any one performance so there's a real team spirit. There are people working in lighting, sound, wardrobe, wigs, props, carpentry and stage

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management. Apart from the technical side we also have to look after the actors. As stage manager it's my job to meet and greet the cast on their first day and make sure they know where everything is and have everything they need. The hardest thing I've ever had to do was try to control 2,500 primary school children. I really like what I do. There are of course a

number of disadvantages; I don't like the hours and the disruption to my personal life that working evenings can cause. But I would highly recommend it to others; it's very enjoyable and always different; you never have the same day twice and there's something very exciting and beautiful about live theatre.

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| A | It was a course for people who didn't know anything about the theatre. | F | found it hugely exciting. |
| B | The more I found out about technical theatre the more interested I became. | G | Working in a large theatre is much more difficult because there are so many more people to organise. |
| C | Also there's quite a lot of instability and insecurity to the job and the money is not always good. | H | Theatres are looking for people with proven ability and who know what they are doing, and what interests them the most on your CV is your last job. |
| D | While the cast were getting ready we would get on with any necessary maintenance jobs. | | |
| E | I was very curious as I watched the whole thing being put together and I | | |