

TEST 8 PAPER 1: READING Part 2 (questions 9-15)

Part 2

You are going to read an interview with a couple who own a holiday home in the French Pyrenees. 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.**

Why did you decide to buy a holiday home here?

We have always loved travelling and spending time in different countries on holidays. It made sense to us to have somewhere which was our own, where we could go back to again and again whenever we liked. **9** It has everything we were looking for: mountains, beautiful scenery, good countryside for walking and there are towns and a major city nearby. We looked at some very remote places but decided we wanted to be in a town. We enjoy being able to walk down to the shops in the morning to get fresh bread and walk to a restaurant for dinner in the evening. It was important to us that it was easy to get to for short holidays too so the fact that there is an airport nearby was a key factor.

10 We love both of our houses even though they are very different in style and in very different places.

How did you find this particular property?

We did some research into the area we liked and we looked at adverts on the Internet, which gave us an idea of what was available. Then we went to an agency which specialised in property in the area where we were looking. They were really helpful and in three days they took us to a number of different houses as well as some empty plots of land with potential for building a new property. **11** We spent time talking to the couple who were selling it and looking around the garden as well as the house. It's not a big house; there are only two bedrooms, but it is exactly what we were looking for. It has a fantastic terrace with views of the mountains and because it is high up we can see right over the town too. It's very picturesque. It has a wonderful big fireplace too so is nice and warm in winter. In

fact it is a beautiful place to have a holiday at any time of the year.

What do you like most about owning a second home?

12 We spend lots of holidays here ourselves and sometimes friends and family join us, but we also let friends and family stay in it by themselves if they want to. It means the house is occupied more, and the more it is used the better. It would be a shame if it were empty a lot of the time. We also like that we have met some good friends here. **13** It means we don't feel like strangers when we're here. Another thing we like is that there is always somewhere new to visit and explore as well as favourite places to go back to.

Have you ever had any problems with the house?

Fortunately no, nothing serious but it is always a worry when it is empty for long periods of time and we are so far away. We are lucky to have helpful neighbours and friends who live nearby who can keep an eye on the house for us. In the very cold weather last winter the pipe to the outside tap froze and split but the postman noticed and sealed it for us. We had a problem with the hot water tank once too. We arrived one time and turned it on and suddenly water started pouring down the stairs. **14** We were able to get a plumber to come and look at it and then arranged for a new one to be fitted so it wasn't too bad. One advantage of not always being here is that we have been able to have both the bathrooms redecorated. Some friends of ours did all the work for us and it worked out really well.

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Would you like to move and live here permanently?

No. We have too much that we would miss back home: good friends and family. 15 We might come for a month or more at a time instead of a week or two as we do now. But we

bought it as a holiday home or second home not somewhere to live all the time. We like having both our homes and don't want to give up either of them. We are very lucky that we can enjoy spending time in two lovely houses.

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| A | We visited this area a couple of times and we really liked it. | E | The house we now own was actually the last one we saw and we instantly knew it was perfect. |
| B | That wasn't a very good start to our holiday but it is lucky it happened to us and not friends of ours. | F | The weather is usually better than what we're used to at home with lots of blue sky and sunshine, even in winter. |
| C | Next year we will both retire and then we will be able to spend much more time here. | G | It is so nice each time we come out to have a group of people to spend time with and social events to go to. |
| D | And finally we were looking for somewhere in contrast to where we live the rest of the year. | H | We love that we can share it with our friends and family. |