Unit 3 Exam practice

Jury service in the UK

A Every year in the UK, over 400,000 people are called for jury service, meaning that they might have to take unpaid leave from work, possibly sit on an upsetting trial, and make difficult decisions about another person’s future. However, jury service is a civic duty, and it is as important as paying taxes. Without it, the legal system in the UK would not be as fair. Although critics say that jurors sometimes don’t understand the legal process, a jury can provide an unbiased opinion of whether the accused is guilty or not guilty, based purely on information presented in court.

B In the UK, almost anyone between the ages of 18 and 70 can be a juror, and names are chosen at random from a computer. People in some professions are exempt from jury service, including members of the military. You can also be exempt if you suffer from a mental illness or have spent time in prison. You must do jury service if you are asked to, although you can ask to delay it until another time in the same twelve-month period if, for example, you have already booked a holiday. People who fail to turn up for jury service may be fined £1,000, and in 2011 there was even a report of a juror who was sentenced to two weeks’ imprisonment for pretending to be ill when he should have been attending the final day of a trial.

C Jurors normally have to go to court for a two-week period, although this may be longer if they are sitting on a complicated trial, or shorter if the trial is more straightforward. In England and Wales, there are twelve members of a jury in a criminal trial, while in Scotland there are fifteen. Jurors must listen to the evidence presented; the questioning of the accused, the victims and the witnesses; and the summaries from the barristers and the judge. The jurors must then discuss the case with each other in private and decide whether they think the accused is guilty or not guilty. Jurors must not discuss the case with anyone outside the jury, even when the trial has ended.

D Jury service can be inconvenient. It may also be upsetting, or simply boring. However, it can also be one of the most interesting and satisfying things that someone ever does in his or her life. It has given us the right to a fair trial for almost 1,000 years, and is a central part of the British legal system.

Reading

1 Choose the correct answers.

1 In the UK, 400,000 people each year:
   A apply to become jury members.
   B are accused of not understanding the legal system.
   C are asked to be jury members.

2 You may be fined £1,000 if you:
   A fail to do your jury service.
   B delay your jury service.
   C take longer than two weeks to complete your jury service.

3 Jurors are allowed to discuss the trial:
   A only with each other.
   B with their family after the trial has finished.
   C only with the accused and the judge.

2 Write a summary of the text in English. Take the main points from the text but use your own words as much as possible. (Maximum 50 words)

3 Translate the following words into your own language.
   1 duty __________________
   2 unbiased __________________
   3 barrister __________________
   4 exempt __________________

4 Look at the letters in bold. Circle the word in each group which does not have the same phonetic sound.
   1 critics / legal / decision / guilty
   2 court / boring / chosen / shorter
   3 provide / private / final / witness
   4 unpaid / fair / information / fail
   5 work / service / her / interesting

Writing

5 Write a text on the reasons why you would or wouldn’t like to serve on a jury. Write 100–150 words.
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Listening

1 Check you know the meaning of the words in the list.
   antisocial = misbehave = humiliate = resentment = civil liberties

2 Read questions 1–8. Then listen to the radio interview and choose the correct answers.

1 The presenter says that 4.2 million:
   A people have been arrested because of CCTV cameras.
   B CCTV cameras were installed in the UK in 1990.
   C CCTV cameras may exist currently in the UK.

2 Talking CCTV cameras:
   A have been installed in many areas of England since 2007.
   B are all controlled by Middlesbrough council.
   C have only been installed in Middlesbrough.

3 Tony says that Middlesbrough council:
   A introduced talking CCTV cameras to try to reduce antisocial behaviour.
   B wants to increase the number of police officers in the town.
   C has succeeded in stamping out most types of crime with talking CCTV cameras.

4 According to Tony, in Middlesbrough, it’s cheaper to:
   A recruit more police officers.
   B install talking CCTV cameras.
   C provide more litter bins.

5 Talking CCTV cameras can help the police because:
   A they stop all forms of antisocial behaviour.
   B the information from the cameras helps them to find offenders.
   C fewer police officers need to be employed.

6 Liz says that talking CCTV cameras:
   A haven’t reduced crime rates at all.
   B aren’t popular with anyone.
   C don’t show respect for people.

7 Liz thinks that:
   A talking CCTV cameras are a good way of reducing crime.
   B talking CCTV cameras make people more aware of what is right or wrong.
   C it’s wrong for talking CCTV cameras to spy on innocent people.

8 Liz would like to see:
   A more talking CCTV cameras in her area.
   B more police officers in her area.
   C better behaviour from police officers in her area.

Speaking

1 Look at the photo and answer the questions.

   1 Describe what you can see and who the people are.
   2 Does this place look like somewhere comfortable to live? Give reasons for your answer.

2 Many prisons in the UK hold a lot more prisoners than they were originally designed for. Discuss with a partner why you think this has happened and the impact overcrowding has on prisoners. Can you think of any ways in which the number of prisoners could be reduced? Use the language of expressing opinions below.

   Expressing opinions
   ■ I firmly believe that …
   ■ It’s my view that …
   ■ I’d say that …
   ■ As far as I’m aware, …
   ■ As far as I’m concerned, …
   ■ Speaking personally, …
   ■ If you ask me, …
   ■ I don’t think that …

3 In pairs, prepare and practise a discussion on whether a criminal who has not committed a serious crime should be released early from prison because of its poor conditions. Use the language from exercise 2 to plan your discussion.