

Gapped text

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1 Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.

- 1 Can you think of any authors who became successful at a young age? What was the first work they became famous for? How old were they when they wrote it?
- 2 What makes it difficult for young authors to get their work published?

2 Quickly read the article about a young author and decide what type of story (a, b, c or d) she wrote.

- a short story
- b memoir
- c novel
- d autobiography

EXAM STRATEGY

- Read the whole text first, ignoring the gaps, to understand what it is about.
- Analyse the sentences before and after the gaps and think about what information is missing. Then read the phrases in the exam task and try to find reference words which link them with other parts of the text.

3 EXAM TASK Read the text. Choose from (A–H) the phrase which best fits each space (1–6). There are two choices you do not need to use.

- A having been educated in England from an early age
- B several more novels and a collection of short stories
- C managed to find the time to write two stage plays
- D while settling in a new country had a big impact
- E her own childhood experiences
- F including New York, Paris, Budapest and Berlin
- G she was studying for her A-level exams
- H moving to a different country brings with it its own difficulties

Words in context

4 Find the highlighted words in the article, and match them with the words and phrases (1–8) which have a similar meaning.

- 1 conflicts _____
- 2 leading character _____
- 3 praise _____
- 4 accomplishment _____
- 5 focuses _____
- 6 become known _____
- 7 source for ideas _____
- 8 passionately _____

The ICARUS Girl

When Helen Oyeyemi sent twenty pages of writing to a literary agent, no one imagined that seven weeks later she would have completed her first novel and signed a £400,000 book deal with an international publisher. Her **feat** is all the more amazing since ¹_____ at the same time.

Helen was born in 1984 in Nigeria and moved to south London when she was four years old. However, it hasn't been an easy road to success for Helen. Her idea for the book came partly from ²_____ and partly from her imagination. The richly-textured ghost story **centres around** a girl called Jess whose twin dies at birth. Jess moves to England from Nigeria, and the events which **unfold** show how Jess's own culture **clashes** with her new culture in England. As in Helen's own life, ³_____.

After her first book, *The Icarus Girl*, was released to critical **acclaim** in 2005, Helen went on to study social and political sciences at Cambridge University. Despite being busy with her college studies, she also ⁴_____, which her fellow students performed to glowing reviews. Although at the time she **vehemently** denied having any plans to become a full-time writer, she has, since then, published ⁵_____. Her works often focus on female **protagonists** finding their way in an often hostile world.

Having lived in various places around the world, ⁶_____, Helen finally settled in Prague in 2014. She continues writing and publishing to this day. Her style has sometimes been compared to that of Edgar Allan Poe and Emily Dickinson – authors that Helen herself acknowledges as her key sources of **inspiration**.



6 Complete the sentences (1–8) with your answers from exercise 4. Use the correct form of each word or phrase.

- 1 My _____ for painting always comes from nature.
- 2 In the final scene, two armies _____ on a battlefield.
- 3 The plot gradually _____, and everything became clear.
- 4 The novel's main _____ is an unhappy detective.
- 5 Our school orchestra achieved an amazing _____ by winning the contest!
- 6 *The Lord Of The Rings* saga _____ a mission to save the world from evil forces.
- 7 This movement won _____ for its brave position on race equality.
- 8 He _____ denied the accusations made against him.

Using *since* to connect ideas

6 Find and underline two examples of *since* in the article. Match the examples to the uses.

- 1 first paragraph _____
- 2 third paragraph _____
- a expressing the reason for a claim
- b indicating the starting point of a period of time in the past

7 Identify the use of *since* (a or b) in the sentences (1–4).

- 1 I've loved you since the day we met. _____
- 2 I believe you since you've always been my friend. _____
- 3 You had to take the blame since it was your responsibility. _____
- 4 You've not been the same since it became your responsibility. _____

8 Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.

- 1 Which literary character do you feel is closest to your own life experience? Why?
- 2 Which book has had the most profound influence on you? Why do you think it has been so influential?