



## Part 2

For questions 17–22, choose which of the paragraphs A–G on page 51 fit into the numbered gaps in the following magazine article. There is one extra paragraph which does not fit in any of the gaps. In the exam, you will mark your answers on a separate answer sheet.

### The story of the lamb-plant

According to a recent survey, 70 per cent of ten-year-olds living in Scotland's big cities think that cotton comes from sheep. It's easy enough to mistake the soft white stuff sold in fluffy balls in plastic bags at the local chemist's shop or supermarket with the curly stuff on a sheep's back, especially when the only sheep you've seen are in books or on the TV.

17

Rumours had first begun to circulate way back in the Middle Ages. The *borametz*, also known as the 'lamb-plant', was said to exist in Tartary, a far-away land stretching across Eastern Europe and Asia. None of those who told the various tales had actually seen it, but they'd always met men who had.

18

The man responsible for spreading the story in Britain was John Mandeville, a knight of England who left home in 1322, and for the next 34 years travelled about the world to many diverse countries. His account of what he saw was the medieval equivalent of a bestseller, and was translated in every European language. He wrote that he too had seen a type of fruit that when opened, proved to contain a small white creature that looked in every way to be a lamb.

19

This was apparently proof enough for Mandeville and those who passed on the story. With each telling, the story gained new details and greater credibility. But in the 16th and 17th centuries, people learned more about the world and its inhabitants. As doubts crept in, more sceptical travellers set out in search of the mysterious lamb of Tartary.

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And so it went on. As soon as anyone voiced doubts, someone else popped up with new 'evidence' of the lamb's existence. In 1605, Frenchman Claude Duret devoted a whole chapter of a book on plants to the borametz. But then, 80 years later, the great traveller Engelbrecht Kaempfer went east looking for it. He found nothing but ordinary sheep. The number of believers was dwindling, and in London the renowned scientific academy, the Royal Society, decided it was time to 'kill off' the borametz for good.

21

This, the Society reckoned, was what had started the ancient rumours. They proclaimed it to be a 'specimen' of a borametz, in fact. Hans Sloane, founder of the British Museum, described the specimen in a contemporary publication: it was made from the root of a tree fern, had four legs and a head and seemed to be shaped by nature to imitate a lamb. The four-footed fake also had 'wool' of a dark golden yellow. Despite this discrepancy in the colour of its fleece, the Royal Society considered the case closed.

22

The answer was there all along in the writings of ancient travellers. While researching his book *Sea Monsters Unmasked*, the observant Henry Lee kept coming across detailed descriptions of plants that sounded far more like the prototype borametz. The Royal Society, Lee decided, had failed to spot the obvious connection and had settled for something so unlikely it had to be wrong. What so many had imagined to be a mythical animal in fact turned out to be ordinary cotton.



- A** And so it was, more or less, for 180 years. Then a little known naturalist pointed out that their so-called 'original' lamb-plant was a false clue. There was, however, a plant that had almost certainly given rise to the notion of the borametx.
- B** There's certainly doubt as to whether this was based on first-hand experience, but the contemporary guidebooks were certainly available. A few years earlier, a monk who came from a monastery near Padua, wrote that 'there grow fruits, which when they are ripe and open, display a little beast much like a young lamb'. He claimed he had heard this from reliable sources.
- C** The best way, it felt, was by showing people how the idea had begun. It was then lucky enough to suddenly receive a curious object from China, a sort of toy animal made from a plant with a few extra bits stuck on to give it a proper number of limbs.
- D** In some versions the 'vegetable lambs' were the fruits of a tree that grew from a round seed. When the fruits ripened, they burst open to reveal tiny lambs with soft white fleeces that the natives used to make their cloth. In others, the seed gave rise to a white lamb that grew on a stalk rooted in the ground, and lived by grazing on any plants it could reach.
- E** There's less excuse for the generations of explorers, scholars and philosophers who were perhaps even more naïve. They were all happy to accept the story that the soft fibres from which eastern people wove fine white cloth came, in fact, from a creature that was half-plant, half-animal.
- F** Distorted descriptions of the cotton plants seen in India preceded the actual plants by many years. In the meantime, traders bought samples of cotton 'wool' along trade routes that passed through Tartar lands. To those who had never seen raw cotton, this fine 'Tartar wool' looked like something that might come from the fleece of a lamb.
- G** Still it eluded them, yet most came home convinced that it existed. One of these was a powerful baron who represented the Holy Roman Empire at the Russian court. The baron had dismissed the sheep-on-a-stalk as fable until he heard the creature described by a 'person in high authority' whose father had once been an envoy to the King of Tartary. The story was enough to convince the baron.

Before you check your answers, go to page 52.

**WHAT'S TESTED****Gapped-text task**

Part 2 of the Reading Paper tests your ability to recognise the way a text is structured. You are required to read a gapped text on one page and then choose which extracts on the second page fit each gap. There is only one possible answer for each gap.

**TIPS**

- Read the gapped text first to understand the general idea of the content, meaning and structure.
- If the text is a narrative, look for tenses, words or phrases that indicate time (e.g. *shortly after this, from my previous experience, it was the first time I had...*) and linkers that show cause and effect (*and it was for that reason, in order not to repeat that mistake, it was largely due to that advice that...*).
- If the text presents an argument or discussion, you can look for cause and effect, phrases or linkers that show agreement or contrast (*Many people would go along with that / However, scientists discovered that this was not the case / Nevertheless, researchers continued to maintain...*).
- It is also useful to look for repeated names, dates and pronouns:  
*At last one of the **archaeologists** found what seemed to be a **clue**. It was **this** (clue) that gave **them** (the archaeologists) hope.*
- Don't just read the first and last line of each extract. Often the clues or connecting ideas are in the middle of the extract.

**A DETAILED STUDY**

The questions below will help you to make sure that you have chosen the correct options for questions 17–22.

- 17 The text above 17 says that it is easy for children to confuse the product sold in supermarkets and chemists (manufactured cotton wool) with real wool from sheep. Which option A–G suggests that other people should have been able to recognise whether they were looking at real wool or not?
- 18 The text under 18 says he wrote that *'he too had seen a type of fruit that when opened, proved to contain ... a lamb'*. The 'too' suggests that the option must contain a similar description. Which option seems similar? In the text above 18, notice the words 'various tales', and under 18, 'the story'. In the option you use, which words refer to 'tales and stories'?
- 19 In the text below 19, notice the words, 'This was ... proof enough for Mandeville'. Which option gives an example of something that John Mandeville would believe he could trust?
- 20 The text above 20 finishes with 'more ... travellers set out in search of the...lamb'. Which option starts with a reference to 'travellers' (plural) and 'lamb' (singular)? What word in the first line of that option means 'to avoid being found'? The text under 20 starts with 'And so it went on'. What does 'it' refer to in the option and in the following sentence?
- 21 In the text under 21, the text starts with 'This ... was what ... had started the ... rumours. It was a 'specimen''. Which option contains a 'singular' reference?
- 22 In the text above 22, it finishes with 'the case (this particular situation was) closed'. Which option begins with a reference to 'the case'? The text under 22 also mentions 'Henry Lee'. How has he been introduced in the option?

Now check your answers to Part 2 of the test.