

Reading 1

Read the text and choose the correct answers below

I. Thirty-five years ago, Malcolm Burwell was a very successful young actor appearing in a number of series on British television. He was lucky, he'd made it to the top quite quickly and had plenty of work. Hollywood directors had ever begun to suggest that he might like to think of making his **fortune** across the Atlantic. But two things made Malcolm think twice about these offers. He didn't want to move his young family to the USA, and a mystery illness was beginning to throw his whole future into doubt.

II. Malcolm had a problem with his voice. It began to grow steadily weaker and weaker until hospital treatment became necessary. Before this finally took effect, however, he found he could hardly talk. As he remembers, 'When you are in danger of losing something central to your career, it makes you think very hard. I have to say I learnt a lot from the experience. My voice recovered, but it taught me the importance of getting the best out of what you've got. As it got better and stronger, I started doing things like public readings of poetry and pieces of literature, just to use it professionally again.' This turned out to be the start of a whole new direction for his career. So popular have these readings become, that Malcolm is now extremely familiar to people as the voice on a number of readings of best-selling books which have been recorded on to tape. Instantly recognisable, his voice is now a **much sought-after** commodity.

III. Malcolm first approached publishers with the idea of selling books on tape all those years ago. At first, they said that only blind people listened to books on tape. But times were changing and when he did eventually convince one of them to try it, instant success followed. Now the market for such tapes in Britain is worth \$25 million a year.

IV. Although Malcolm continues to work in television and theatre, it is his readings of literature that have really made him famous. When he is recording Malcolm uses his voice to give an impression of the different characters. 'I don't try to convince the audience that I am an 11-year-old boy at one moment and his grandfather the next,' he says, 'but I use my voice to try and make the listener believe that I've really got a story to tell them rather than just a book to read out.'

V. Malcolm carefully does his homework on any book he has agreed to record, although he knows some actors do not. He tells the story of one well-known British actor whose enthusiastic producer commented on what a great thriller it was they were about to record. 'Is it?' said the actor, opening the script for the first time. 'All very well,' says Malcolm, 'until you discover on page two hundred that the character you've given a Scottish accent to is supposed to come from Wales!'

a) Why did Malcolm not go to the USA thirty-five years ago?

1. His family opposed it.
2. The offers weren't good enough.
3. He was in poor health.

- b) How did Malcolm's illness affect his career?**
1. He could no longer do certain types of work.
 2. He had to be very careful when using his voice.
 3. It made him appreciate his voice more.
- c) How did publishers react initially to the idea of books on tape?**
1. They thought the market was limited.
 2. They thought nobody would buy them.
 3. They were keen to open up a new market.
- d) When recording, Malcolm is keen to convince his listeners that**
1. different people are reading the story.
 2. he is actually telling them a story.
 3. the events are really happening.

Choose the best explanation for the words or phrases from the text

- e) Fortune**
1. Property
 2. Application
 3. Name
- f) Much sought-after**
1. Entirely forgotten
 2. Rarely used
 3. In great demand