

READING

- 7 Read the article and choose the correct answer, A, B, C or D.

The human scarecrow

Being told to bring a deckchair and a good book for the first day in a new job might not be the kind of advice you'd expect to receive from your new boss, but that's exactly the advice Jamie Fox was given when he took up a post to help out a local farmer.

Fox, twenty-two, a music graduate from Bangor University, uses a range of musical instruments to scare off partridges that have been destroying crops because ordinary scarecrows don't quite seem up to the job. Despite working from 7.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. for a minimum wage, Fox, who is saving up to finance a trip to New Zealand, is quite content with his unique position. Indeed, he'd much rather be out in the open air reading and playing instruments, he says, and time passes much quicker than sitting at home doing nothing and claiming unemployment benefit.

Fox can do anything he likes to pass the time. As well as playing musical instruments and reading to relieve the monotony, other perks of the job include doing Sudoku puzzles, observing the wildlife and daydreaming. He does, however, need to get out of the comfort of his chair occasionally to scare the partridges off the fields. And although the work is far from lucrative, some of Jamie's friends, including those with more generously paid jobs, are reportedly envious of his position and the fact that he spends the best part of the day doing largely as he pleases.

His employer, farmer William Youngs, claims that he was forced to take someone on as a human scarecrow after the partridges didn't respond to more traditional methods of frightening them away. Since losing thirty acres worth of crops to the birds at a cost of thousands of pounds, Youngs has tried a variety of approaches to protect his livelihood. Now, however, he is happy with the solution and claims that Jamie's presence in the fields is proving very effective and making a real difference.

- 1 Jamie Fox's plans include
 - A joining a band.
 - B becoming a farmer.
 - C travelling abroad.
 - D earning more money.
- 2 Jamie Fox is happy with his job because
 - A he never gets bored.
 - B he uses his educational background.
 - C he has plenty of free time during the day.
 - D he thinks it is better than being out of work.
- 3 What is true about Jamie's job?
 - A He doesn't need to move.
 - B He has replaced another person.
 - C He gets uncomfortable.
 - D He makes a lot of noise.
- 4 Jamie's friends are envious because of
 - A the hours he works.
 - B the nature of his work.
 - C the money he earns.
 - D the fact he enjoys what he is doing.
- 5 Mr Youngs decided to employ Jamie because
 - A he can pay him a low wage.
 - B he considered Jamie a good worker.
 - C he lost lots of crops previously.
 - D he wants to help with the problem of unemployment.

SPEAKING

- 8 In pairs, discuss the questions.

- 1 What types of part-time jobs are offered to teens in your area?
- 2 What are the advantages and disadvantages of setting up your own business?
- 3 Is it better to choose a job that you like doing or one which has a good salary?
- 4 How can young people find out about the best job for them?
- 5 Some famous people, like footballers, earn very high salaries. Is this a good thing? Why?/Why not?

WRITING

- 9 Complete the writing task.

You have seen this advertisement in an international students' website.

Gap year students, we want articles!

Are you considering taking a year off before university or have you already done this?

Write an article for our magazine about your plans for a gap year or your experiences. How can a gap year help or hinder your education?

The best articles will be published in the next edition.

Write your article in 140–190 words.

