



Student's name _____ code _____

READING TEST 11th FORM VARIANT 1

PART 1

You are going to read an article about an English poet, William Wordsworth. For questions (1-8), choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text. Transfer answers to answer-sheet (the form on a separate page).

Daffodils Everywhere

Two hundred years ago the English poet William Wordsworth wrote 'I wander'd lonely as a cloud', a poem that expresses a basic spirit of early English Romanticism. It was Thursday, 15th April 1802.

William and Dorothy Wordsworth, the poet's devoted, journal-writing sister, were walking home to Dove Cottage in the Lake District. The wind was fierce, but the Wordsworth siblings were used to striding long distances in foul weather. They were in the woods close to the water side when they first clapped eyes on a field of daffodils 'fluttering and dancing in the breeze'.

What makes this poem an example of Romantic thinking? It isn't just that Wordsworth chooses to write about a natural scene: it is the way he describes the scene as if it had human emotions. For him, nature is not merely a neutral mixture of scenery, colours, plants, rocks, soil, water and air. It is a living force that feels joy and sadness, shares human pain and even tries to educate us human beings by showing us the beauty of life.

Wordsworth's home, Dove Cottage, is now one of the most popular destinations in the Lake District. You can go on a tour of the garden which William planted with wild flowers and which survived in his backyard even after they disappeared from the area. 'He always said that if he hadn't been a poet, he would have been a terrific landscape gardener,' says Allan King of the Wordsworth Trust, the organisation that looks after the cottage and gardens.

The Lake District in the north-west of England becomes particularly crowded during the summer months with tourists and ramblers eager to enjoy the region's majestic valleys, hills and sparkling lakes. Wordsworth himself was far from keen on tourists, which was quite apparent. He wanted outsiders to 32 admire the local sights he enjoyed so much, but was afraid the district might be 'damaged' by too many visitors. He opposed the coming of the trains, and campaigned in the 1840s against a plan to link the towns in the area – Kendal, Windermere and Keswick – by rail.

The place near Ullswater, where Wordsworth saw the daffodils, is at the southernmost end of the lake. The lake is wide and calm at this turning point. There's a bay where the trees have had their soil eroded by lake water so that their roots are shockingly exposed. You walk along from tree to tree, hardly daring to breathe, because you are walking in the 43 footprints of William and Dorothy from two centuries ago. The first clumps of daffodils appear, but they aren't tall yellow trumpets proudly swaying in the breeze. They're tiny wild daffodils, most of them still green and unopened, in clumps of six or seven. They're grouped around individual trees rather than collecting together.

But as you look north, from beside a huge ancient oak, you realise this is what delighted the Wordsworths: clump after clump of the things, spread out to left and right but coming together in your vision so that they form a beautiful, pale-yellow carpet. What you're seeing at last is nature transformed by human sight and imagination. For a second, you share that revelation of Dorothy and William Wordsworth's, the glimpse of pantheism, the central mystery of English Romanticism.

- 1 According to the article, Wordsworth's poem
 - A started the Romantic movement.
 - B was based on actual experience.
 - C was written while he was visiting his sister.
 - D was written after he had been lonely.
- 2 What was Wordsworth's attitude to nature?
 - A He believed nature had a character of its own.
 - B He felt nature was human.
 - C He thought nature could talk to people.
 - D He believed that we could influence nature.
- 3 We are told that Dove Cottage
 - A has gardens designed by a landscape gardener.
 - B has very old plants in the garden.
 - C gets a lot of visitors.
 - D has a large backyard.
- 4 What does 'which' in line 32 refer to?
 - A the number of tourists who come to the Lake District
 - B Wordsworth's desire for outsiders to admire the local sights
 - C the fact that Wordsworth was keen on tourists from far away
 - D Wordsworth's dislike of tourists
- 5 What does the writer suggest by the words 'hardly daring to breathe' in line 43?
 - A You have to walk carefully here.
 - B You can't breathe because the atmosphere is suffocating.
 - C You feel excited to be in this place.
 - D You must concentrate to stay on the footpath.
- 6 In what way is the scene different from what Wordsworth described?
 - A All the daffodils are green and small.
 - B There are no daffodils by the lake.
 - C The daffodils are fewer and smaller.
 - D There are no daffodils around trees.
- 7 The writer implies that the poem describes
 - A exactly what Wordsworth saw in detail.
 - B the effect the daffodils had on Wordsworth.
 - C what Wordsworth saw around an ancient oak.
 - D clumps of daffodils on the left and on the right.
- 8 What does the writer think of Wordsworth as a poet?
 - A He believes Wordsworth was an important figure in English culture.
 - B He is critical of Wordsworth.
 - C He believes Wordsworth was a sentimental person.
 - D He disagrees with Wordsworth's opinion about nature.