

PAPER 1 - READING

PART 1

Lightning

You are going to read a newspaper article about lightning. Choose the most suitable heading from the list (A-I) for each part (1-7) of the article. There is one extra heading which you do not need to use. There is an example at the beginning (0).

- A Lightning strikes twice.
- B Modern life needs more protection.
- C Striking every second.
- D Less harm than you'd think.
- E Trying to understand lightning.
- F Predicting danger.
- G You should know what to do.
- H Calm Britain - stormy equator.
- I Different lifestyles, fewer deaths.

0  **C**

As you read through this, some 2,000 thunderstorms are tearing apart the skies across the world. And every second a hundred lightning bolts are striking the ground with their terrifying roar - fingers of electricity up to 32 kilometres long that burn all they touch with temperatures that reach 30,000°C. It's hardly surprising that lightning was feared by earlier cultures as a sign of anger from their gods.

1

Lightning still has the power to thrill and fascinate. It is now also an active area of research for scientists, who are still struggling to uncover its secrets and are looking for ways to protect against the potentially disastrous effects of lightning strikes.

2

Britain only has about 10 days of thunderstorms a year. Yorkshire and the south Midlands are the worst affected. By contrast, countries close to the equator suffer most from thunderstorms. Countries like Nigeria, for example, tend to have a thunderstorm every two days.

3

For centuries, however, there was little anyone could do to protect themselves or their property from lightning. And up until the 18th century, people were often given dramatic proof that lightning can strike in the same place several times. The campanile of San Marco in Venice has, to date, been severely damaged or destroyed nine times.

4

Predicting when and where it is likely to strike is one of the ways we have made lightning less of a menace. Forecasting lightning is taken very seriously in America, for example, where scientists keep a constant eye on weather patterns that could lead to violent storms. New methods enable scientists to warn people in threatened areas before a storm reaches them.

5

A good indication of the fact that a lightning strike is directly overhead is when your hair stands on end. In potentially fatal circumstances, crouch down low with your hands on your knees. Never lie on the ground. If stuck out in a storm never shelter under an isolated tree, which can act as a lightning conductor, and stay away from anything made of metal.

6

Although the number of fatalities has decreased, lightning is no less common than it was in the past. The reason for the decrease in deaths is that fewer people work out in the open. Those most at risk today include sports people, especially golfers: dozens are struck worldwide each year.

7

Lightning protection is more important today than ever. The widespread use of electronic technology means a surge of electricity caused by lightning could have devastating effects on a hospital, for example. If lightning were to strike one of the complex electronic systems we use, the consequences would be disastrous.