

## I. Reading Comprehension

Read the following text, then answer the questions.

### Fool If You Think It's Over

*In hospital and facing death, Chris Rea decided it was time to make the blues music he really loved. And it's wonderful, says Mark Edwards.*

I feel guilty as I approach Chris Rea's studios. A couple of months earlier, his record company had sent me his new album to give my feedback. It's fantastic, I told them, the best thing he's ever done. Then – almost as an afterthought, in case this all sounded too **gushing** – I added that it might benefit from being a little shorter.

After all, it was a radical change of direction from a man best known for soft-rock hits like *On the Beach* and *Road to Hell*. Since then I have found out that I had been sent only half of the tracks Rea wanted to release. He wanted the new album to be a double, but his record company, East West, disapproved. Thus, Rea left East West and opted to release the new album, *Dancing Down the Road*, on his own label, Jazzy Blue.

As I got close to his studios, I began to wonder if my comment had affected him in any way. To my surprise and immense relief, Rea laughed and thanked me. After nearly a quarter of a century of dealing with major record labels, he was glad to be free.

While just about every musician can chat about a list of complaints about their label, Rea's label relationship have led him to be trapped in what he calls "this horrible executive rock thing" for 25 years. A man whose inspiration was the delta blues found himself instead **bracketed** for his vocals alongside Dire Straits and Phil Collins, following the huge success of his early single *Fool (If You Think It's Over)*.

'I had no ambition to be a singer,' he says. 'That was an accident, and I went along with it. You think, next time around I'll slip into what I really want to do... but it never exactly happened.' Once his record company knew that he could write inexpensive hits, they wanted more of the same hits. Rea doesn't blame them; he blames himself for being too **compliant**. 'It's actually a failing of mine, not theirs. I've always been very eager to help get the job done. To do what's required.'

It took the anticipation of his own death for Rea to finally make the album he's been dreaming of all these years. Rea has had a series of operations over the past eight years, the last of which's diagnosis proved that he had little more than a 50/50 chance of surviving. As he was being lead to the operating room, he thought, 'I've got to get through this. I can't die yet because the sound that the onlookers love when I play live wasn't on record. That became my aim. I don't know how many copies the new album will sell, but what I do know is that I'll stamp my name on it.' Quite right too, *Dancing Down the Stony Road* is a marvelous mix of moaning blues, pleading gospel tunes and **raucous** stomps. It's the perfect setting for Rea's voice and amazing guitar playing. It's easier to see Rea's connection to these songs. In the song, Rea sings, 'Come on easy rider; give me something for my pain.' He was talking about real pain.

Rea, however, believes he's always had the blues.

The idea of music as a way of exorcising your fear is revisited on *Dancing the Blues Away*, an upbeat track on the new album that – don't tell East West – is surprisingly radio friendly. Even playing the blues, it seems, Rea can't help creating catchy tunes.

1. Find the word, from the text, that has the following as meaning.

a- impacted

b- something that encourages someone to strive for a goal

- c- medical decision about what illness is affecting a person
- d- spectator

2. Write a sentence using the following words.

- a- tumultuous
- b- certification
- c- attempt
- d- encounter

3. What was the narrator's first reaction to Rea's album?
4. In the sixth paragraph, Rea claims that he can't die yet. Why is that? What does he want to do before he dies?
5. Did Rea's former producing company, East West, approve of making his album a double? Justify your answer with examples from the text.
6. The narrator mentions Chris Rea always having the blues. In your opinion, why was Rea a sad person?
7. Based on what you have just read, are Rea's feelings, towards his operation, positive during the story? Which details from the text help you make this inference?

## II. Grammar

1. Complete the sentences. Use a/an and the correct word from the box.

animal, country, city, language, tv series, brand, insect, sport
--

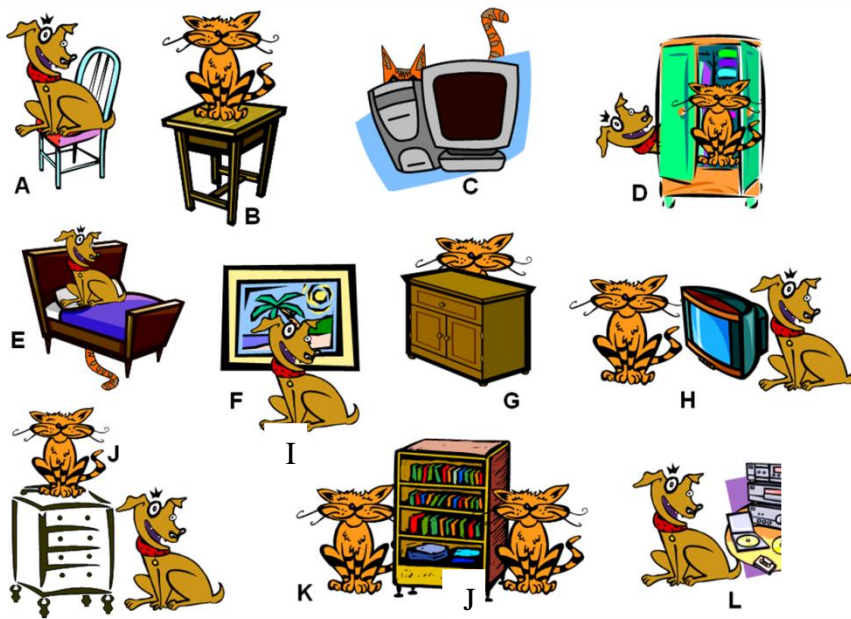
- a. Spanish is ...
  - b. Agent Carter is ...
  - c. Soccer is ...
  - d. Los Angeles is ...
  - e. Tommy Hilfiger is ...
  - f. Portugal is ...
  - g. A horse is ...
  - h. A bee is ...
2. Change these singular sentences into the plural.
- a. A television is a machine.
  - b. He's a lawyer.
  - c. Spring is a season. Autumn is a season.
  - d. London is a city. Berlin is a city.
  - e. Maria is my friend. Eric is my friend.
  - f. He is the director of the project.
3. Complete the sentences with is/are and the correct adjective from the box.

beautiful, interesting, brown, funny, annoying, strong, sweet, colorful
---

- a. These noisy people ...
- b. Flowers ...
- c. These scientific documentaries ...
- d. This comedy show ...
- e. Wood ...
- f. The boxer ... man.

- g. Cupcakes ...
- h. Paintings ...

**4. Complete the sentences with prepositions that describe the pictures.**



- a. The dog is ... the chair.
- b. The cat is ... the table.
- c. The cat is ... the television.
- d. The cat is ... the fridge. The dog is ... the fridge.
- e. The dog is ... the bed.
- f. The dog is ... the picture.
- g. The cat is ... the dresser.
- h. The television is ... the cat and the dog.
- i. The cat is ... the dresser. The dog is ... the dresser.
- j. The bookshelf is ... the cat and the dog.

**5. Make questions for the following answers.**

- a. Yes, it is cold outside.
- b. He put the newspaper next to the television.
- c. Yes, there is a lot of noise in the classroom.
- d. He's leaving for Los Angeles at 1 am.
- e. No, Corey is not at the bank.

**6. Complete the sentences with either has/have.**

- a- We ... a class at ten o'clock.
- b- My uncle ... five children.
- c- Peter ... his own set of car keys.
- d- I ... (negative) beans in my bag.
- e- They ... beautiful accessories.