

Open comprehension

1 In reading activities, what should you do when you come across a new word?

- Look for a definition in the rest of the paragraph.
- Look at the words before and after the unknown word to help you guess the meaning.
- Underline it and try to find it in other parts of the text.

2 Choose the correct alternative.

- Why is there always a cliffhanger/blockbuster? We have to wait a whole week for the next episode!
- The plot was entirely predictable/convincing – nothing remotely original.
- It's a shame that tracks/sequels are rarely as good as the first movie.
- That documentary was really clichéd/inspiring. It made me want to change my lifestyle.
- Mum always wants me to watch rom-coms/thrillers with her. She gets scared!
- I couldn't stop laughing from start to finish. It was hilarious/intriguing!

✓ Exam tip

When you come across new words in a reading text, look at the context: the words before and after the unknown word can help you guess the meaning.

3 Answer the following questions in your own words according to the information given in the text.

- Why is it hard to make an assessment of fanfiction?
.....
- What has caused fanfiction to gain a much wider audience?
.....
- What does *The Fandom* website claim?
.....
- How do the book *Emma* and the film *Clueless* differ from each other?
.....
- What similarity between fanfiction and other writing genres is mentioned in paragraph 4?
.....
- What are two reasons why people decide to write fanfiction?
.....
- How does Naomi Novik differentiate her fanfiction writing from her paid work?
.....
- What does the writer think of those who consider fanfiction to be inferior?
.....

Fanfiction – unoriginal or underappreciated?

To anyone who isn't familiar with fanfiction, the genre is fairly simple to explain: these are stories that are invented by fans about famous fictional characters and often posted on the internet. What might be harder to assess is where this type of creative writing fits into traditional fiction.



Although it has recently become popular with the younger generation, fanfiction has been around since the 1960s when fans started writing about Captain Kirk and Spock from *Star Trek*. Before the internet, it was just a little trickier to find. These days, the opposite is true: it's almost impossible to ignore.

For its audience, fanfiction appears to be every bit as convincing a genre as any other type of writing: it has original storylines, fast-moving action and inspiring plots. According to *The Fandom* website, a number of box office hits have even been based on it: for example, the film, *Clueless*, has a lot in common with the novel, *Emma*, by Jane Austen. The former is set in a 90s high school whereas the latter is set in a small English village in the nineteenth century. Apart from that, there are numerous similarities: both female characters lose their mothers as a child, both are spoilt and both befriend people of lower social status.

Followers of fanfiction believe it's a great way to practice your writing skills. Of course, there are a wide range of abilities and reasons for writing. You have great authors and less talented ones, just like in any field of writing. Some have decided to put pen to paper because they consider the original author's ending to be clichéd or predictable, and want to put it right. Others want to develop the characters further by taking them on another adventure. Whatever the reason, fanfiction is a great way to get into writing and, best of all, you have a large audience who will no doubt give you feedback.

However, it would be wrong to assume that fanfiction is an area limited to writers who didn't quite make the grade. Cassandra Clare, who wrote *Harry Potter* fanfiction, is also the writer of the successful *Mortal Instruments* series of fantasy novels. And the best-selling author of the *Temeraire* books, Naomi Novik, sees little difference between her fanfiction work and her professional writing, except that she writes fanfiction purely for pleasure.

And that's the key point: fanfiction is all about creativity and the love of writing. Does it really matter if it's hard to categorise or if some people look down their noses at it? Not to me and its millions of loyal supporters at least.

4 Find words or phrases in the text for these definitions.

- more difficult
 - become friendly with
 - to start writing something
 - weren't good enough

B2 First Part 3

1 Read the statements about activities where you have to change words to fit the text. Are they True (T) or False (F)?

- 1 Sometimes more than one form of the word can fit in the gap. T / F
- 2 Sometimes the word will need to be in the plural or negative. T / F
- 3 You need to identify if the missing word is a noun, an adjective, an adverb or a verb. T / F

2 Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

ending • plot • realistic • sell-out • stunning • vinyl

- 1 The band had an extremely successful tour.
- 2 I avoid reading tragedies. I can't bear a sad
- 3 The film's is simple: two strangers meet and gradually fall in love.
- 4 Some music fans prefer the sound quality of to downloads.
- 5 That movie is set in Venice and the cinematography is
- 6 I love the artist Caravaggio because of his paintings of people.

✓ Exam tip

In activities where you have to change words to fit the text, think about what type of word is missing: is it a noun, a verb, an adjective or an adverb? Is it positive or negative? Is it singular or plural?

3 For questions 1–8, read the text below. Write the correct form of the words given. There is an example at the beginning (0).



You may not have heard of her, but Florence Lawrence deserves to be given (0) *recognition* (recognise). Born in Canada in the late 1800s, she is often (1) (consider) to be the first film star.

She started acting alongside her mother as a child. This led to her first film (2) (appear) in 1906. By 1910, due to her (3) (popular), Florence's name was put on posters to promote her films – the first time this had ever happened.

Previously, film studios objected to (4) (put) their stars on (5) (promote) material fearing they would demand more money. In reality, back then, actors were uncredited and (6) (poor) paid. By today's standards, Lawrence's stunning (7) (perform) earned her the equivalent of only £470 a week. And this was despite the fact that, by 1909, she had appeared in over 50 films.

Imagine how much Hollywood actors today would complain about (8) (receive) such poor treatment!