

## Where the Wild Things Are (B1)

### A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. What kinds of books did you like when you were a child?
2. Did you have any picture books? If so, what were they about?
3. What frightened you when you were a child?
4. Children's books and films are often about monsters. Do you think this is a good thing or a bad thing? Why?

### B – Listen and answer

Read these statements. Then listen (without reading) and write T (true) or F (false).

1. Maurice Sendak's story *Where the Wild Things Are* is very long.
2. It's a book with pictures.
3. It's about a boy who goes to a planet full of wild animals.
4. Sendak's parents emigrated from Poland to the USA when Sendak was a small child.
5. He did the drawings for books by other authors before writing books himself.
6. Some critics thought *Where the Wild Things Are* could be a bad influence on children.
7. The book did not win any awards when it first came out in the 1960s.
8. The story was made into a film and an opera.

### C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. How does Max end up in a land inhabited by monsters?
2. How do the monsters behave towards him?
3. Why does he decide to return home?
4. What caused Sendak to suffer trauma as a child?
5. Why was Sendak's character, Max, criticised by some people?
6. How did some experts defend this aspect of the book?
7. Why is the book again in danger of being targeted in the US?
8. What did Sendak once say in defence of his book?

### D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the subject, or change from singular to plural.)

1. Canadian adventurer Joshua Slocum was the first person to \_\_\_\_\_ around the world alone.
2. When Sam saw the damage to his car, he tried to keep calm, but he couldn't hide his \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The train and bus strike caused \_\_\_\_\_ on the roads, as people had to drive or cycle to work.
4. These advertisements ought to be \_\_\_\_\_. The information in them is rather misleading.
5. Grace is very popular at school, \_\_\_\_\_ all her faults.
6. I was a bit worried about taking the exam, so I spoke to my teacher, who was very \_\_\_\_\_.

### **E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam? (Paper 1, Reading: Part 5)**

*Choose the correct word in brackets for each space.*

When Sendak started writing his most famous book, he imagined his hero Max <sup>1</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (*escaping/escape/to escape/of escaping*) to a land of wild horses. However, he soon found that he was <sup>2</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (*very/little/no/quite*) good at drawing horses, so he accepted the advice of his editor and wrote about "wild things" <sup>3</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (*rather/instead/apart/ahead*) of wild horses.

His monsters were based on caricatures he had drawn of his aunts and uncles when he was a child. He <sup>4</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (*tells/says/describes/reports*) they had "crazy faces", with red eyes and big yellow teeth. Later, he realised that they were just poor immigrants who <sup>5</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (*lacked/forgot/lost/missed*) the families they had left behind in Poland – families that, unknown to them at the time, they would never see again <sup>6</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (*in view/cause/because/resulting*) of the Holocaust.

### **F – Write about it**

*Write about your favourite book when you were a child.*

- What kind of book was it? A story book? A book about nature/animals/countries?
- Was it illustrated? If so, with drawings or with photos?
- Who was the author?
- How old were you when you read it?
- Why was it your favourite?

## **Answers**

### **B – Listen and answer**

1. F – It's only a few hundred words long. 2. T 3. F – He goes to an island full of monsters. 4. F – They emigrated before Sendak was born. He was born in New York. 5. T 6. T 7. F – When it first came out, it won the Caldecott Medal. 8. T

### **C – Read and answer**

1. His mother punishes him by sending him to his bedroom, where he enters an imaginary world. 2. First they try to scare him. Then, when that fails, they declare him their king. 3. Because he's lonely. 4. Many of his relations were killed in the Holocaust. 5. Because he couldn't control his emotions and this was considered psychologically damaging to young readers. 6. They said it made the book appealing and reassuring for children. 7. Because banning and challenging books has escalated to an unprecedented level in the US. 8. He said that it was not meant to please everybody – only children.

### **D – Learn it! Use it!**

1. sail 2. rage 3. havoc 4. banned 5. despite 6. reassuring

### **E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam?**

1. escaping 2. no 3. instead 4. says 5. missed 6. because