

## The Highland Games (B1)

### A – Before you start

*Answer the questions with a partner.*

1. Have you ever been to Scotland?
2. If so, did you visit the Highlands - the mountainous area in northern Scotland?
3. What do you know about Scottish customs? (e.g. traditional clothes, or Highland sports.)
4. Can you name any Scottish clans?

### B – Listen and answer

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

1. The Highland Games take place from June to September.
2. The best-known of all the Highland Games sporting events is the hammer throw.
3. In medieval times, the games were a way to train fighting men.
4. Stones and logs were used for the events because they were objects that were easily found.
5. The first games of the season are held at Edinburgh Castle.
6. Members of the Royal Family usually attend the Braemar Gathering in Aberdeenshire.
7. The Braemar Gathering takes place at the end of September.
8. To buy tickets, you have to be a member of the Royal Scottish Highland Games Association.

### C – Read and answer

*Read the article and answer the questions.*

1. What do contestants have to do to compete in the caber tossing event?
2. What did clan chiefs use the games for in medieval times?
3. Why are the Atholl Highlanders unique?
4. Which clan is the Duke of Atholl the chief of?
5. What is the March On?
6. How long have the Royal Family been attending the Braemar Gathering?
7. What does the Braemar Highland Society aim to do?
8. What attractions are there at the Braemar Gathering besides the games?

### 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 verb tense, or change from plural to singular.)*

1. The day after his operation, Jack was in an \_\_\_\_\_ position in bed, working on his computer.
2. Before opening a shop, Mia had a market \_\_\_\_\_ where she sold hand-made jewellery.
3. Few club members \_\_\_\_\_ the meeting because most of them hadn't been told about it.
4. Ken Smith lives alone in a remote part of the Highlands in a cabin he made out of \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Don't sit on the edge of the chair like that. If it \_\_\_\_\_, you'll end up on the floor.
6. Is Matt really going to join the army? I can't \_\_\_\_\_ him wearing a uniform.

**E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam? (Paper 1, Reading: Part 6)**

*Write one word only in each space.*

Scotland is broadly split into two parts: the Highlands and the Lowlands. The line between the two runs more or <sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ diagonally across Scotland from a little east <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ Inverness, in the north, to the Isle of Arran, in the southwest. This division is not <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ geographic but also cultural and linguistic.

The Highlands, with its wild mountainous scenery and isolated communities, was the setting for epic films <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ as *Braveheart* and *The Highlander*. The area is one of the most sparsely populated in Europe, with only around 25 inhabitants <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ square mile. Until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Scottish Gaelic, a Celtic language, was widely <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ there. Now the main language is Scottish English.

**F – Write about it**

*Write about a traditional sporting event that takes place in your country in summer. Mention:*

- what it consists of;
- when/where it takes place;
- what its origins are;
- how popular it is.

## **Answers**

### **B – Listen and answer**

1. F – They take place from May to September.
2. F – It's tossing the caber.
3. T
4. T
5. F – They are held at Blair Castle.
6. T
7. F – It takes place on the first Saturday of September.
8. F – Anyone is welcome to go and watch.

### **C – Read and answer**

1. They have to throw a heavy log of Scottish pine. The log has to stand upright and tip over to the other side.
2. They used them to assess the participants and to select bodyguards, fighters and messengers.
3. They are Europe's last remaining private army.
4. He's the chief of the Clan Murray.
5. It's an impressive parade of pipes and drums.
6. Since Queen Victoria's first visit in 1848.
7. It aims to preserve the kilt and the language and customs of the Highlands.
8. There are craft stalls, bagpipe music, local delicacies, whisky and dancing.

### **D – Learn it! Use it!**

1. upright
2. stall
3. attended
4. logs
5. tips over
6. picture

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

1. less
2. of
3. just/only
4. such
5. per/a
6. spoken