Alan Turing (B2 - Upper Intermediate)

A — Before you start
Answer the questions with a partner.
1. Are you interested in computer science?
2. Can you name any of the pioneers in the development of computers?
3. What do you know about Alan Turing?

B — Listen and answer
Read these statements. Then listen (without reading) and write T (true) or F (false).
1. Alan Turing was a legend in his own lifetime.
2. He studied at Cambridge University in early 1930s.
3. During the '30s he built the first "universal computing machine".
4. During World War II, Turing helped to develop a machine able to decipher German messages.
5. The Turing test required two people and two computers.
6. It is not known for sure whether Turin intended to kill himself.

C — Read and answer
Read the article and answer the questions.
1. Where did Alan Turing work during World War II?
2. What effect did his work have on the course of the war?
3. Why wasn't his contribution recognised until many years later?
4. Why did Avi Wigderson consider Turing's paper on the Turing machine so influential?
5. What were Germany's Enigma machines designed to do?
6. What was the purpose of the Turing Test?
7. What was Turing prosecuted for in 1952?
8. What did Turing receive in recognition of the fact that he had been treated unjustly.

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.)
1. Lee has finally passed his driving test, after his fourth _____!
2. They say you can't _____ vegan cheese _____ real cheese, but to me it tastes awful.
3. The table was too high so we got a carpenter to _____ the legs.
4. Before the passing of the Clean Air _____ in 1956, London had been famous for its smog.
5. Grandma didn't want to come, but we _____ persuaded her and she really enjoyed herself.
6. This afternoon a fight _____ _____ at the football stadium between rival fans.

E — Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English? (Reading and Use of English, Part 3)
Use the word in brackets to form a word that fits in the space given.
1. Turing carried out groundbreaking _____ (SCIENCE) work before and after the war.
2. He is considered the father of modern _____ (COMPUTE) and artificial intelligence.

3. His team developed a device to find the various _____ (SET) for Enigma machines.

4. A machine passes the Turing Test if a person can't _____ (RELY) tell it from a human.

5. Turing was accused of _____ (DECENT) in1952, when homosexuality was still illegal.

6. After his conviction, he _____ (WENT) a course of hormonal injections.

7. It is possible that Turing's death was _____ (ACCIDENT).

8. In 2013, the terrible _____ (JUST) of his conviction was finally recognised.

F – Write about it

Write about a well-known and influential scientist from your country. Include information about:

- his/her biography;
- his/her career;
- what he/she discovered or invented;
- what influence this has had.

Answers

B – Listen and answer
1. F – He died in obscurity.   2. T   3. F – He didn't build it. It was a vision of his.   4. T
5. F – It required two people and a computer.   6. T

C – Read and answer
1. He worked at Bletchley Park Code and Cypher School.   2. It shortened the war and saved millions of lives.   3. Because his work was protected by Britain's Official Secrets Act.   4. Because it encapsulated the logical principles of the digital computer and was therefore fundamental in the development of today's computers.   5. They were designed to encode naval messages.   6. It was an attempt to define a standard which would determine whether a computer could think.   7. He was prosecuted for homosexual acts.   8. In 2013, he received a posthumous pardon.

D – Learn it! Use it!
1. attempt   2. tell – from   3. shorten   4. Act   5. eventually   6. broke out

E – Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English?
1. scientific   2. computing/computers   3. settings   4. reliably   5. indecency   6. underwent   7. accidental   8. injustice