

## Stephen Hawking (B2)

### A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Are you interested in cosmology?
2. What do you know about Stephen Hawking?
3. Can you name any other cosmologists?

### B – Listen and answer

Read these incomplete statements. Then listen (without reading) and fill in the blanks.

1. Stephen Hawking died in 2018 at the age of \_\_\_\_\_.
2. His nickname at school was \_\_\_\_\_.
3. He was diagnosed with ALS in 1965, while he was studying for a \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Hawking married fellow student Jane Wilde the same year and they had \_\_\_\_\_ children.
5. He became famous for his scientific work on \_\_\_\_\_.
6. He wanted to develop a complete theory of the \_\_\_\_\_.
7. His book *A Brief \_\_\_\_\_* was a bestseller.
8. His ashes lie in Westminster Abbey, between the graves of Isaac Newton and \_\_\_\_\_.

### C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. What effect did ALS have on Stephen Hawking's speech in the end?
2. What did he dislike about his speech-generating device?
3. Why is his family described as eccentric?
4. What did Hawking's doctors get wrong when he was first diagnosed with ALS?
5. When did his marriage finally break up? Why?
6. What theory did Hawking's work on black holes prove?
7. What induced him to write a popular book about the universe?
8. Why do many people compare the book to James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Cervantes' *Don Quixote*?

### 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. I don't know how my sister \_\_\_\_\_ with four young children and three dogs!
2. This machine has a safety \_\_\_\_\_ that switches it off if it overheats.
3. Rory would have passed the entrance exam if he had \_\_\_\_\_ to it.
4. This book about a family in the 1820s gave me an \_\_\_\_\_ into how people lived then.
5. When our neighbours went on holiday last summer, we \_\_\_\_\_ their cat.
6. Are you sure these two socks are a pair? The colour looks \_\_\_\_\_ different to me.

### 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. Stephen Hawking was a brilliant \_\_\_\_\_ (PHYSICS) and cosmologist.
2. For more than 50 years, he lived with an \_\_\_\_\_ (ILL) that slowly paralysed him.
3. Finally it left him \_\_\_\_\_ (HELP) in a wheelchair.
4. As his condition \_\_\_\_\_ (WORSE) over the years, he was looked after by his wife Jane.
5. He and his wife found themselves \_\_\_\_\_ (ROUND) by nurses and assistants.

6. His work on black holes was a great breakthrough in \_\_\_\_\_ (THEORY) physics.
7. His 1988 book about the universe became a \_\_\_\_\_ (WORLD) bestseller.
8. He explained the universe, despite \_\_\_\_\_ (INCREASE) serious communication problems.

**F – Write about it**

*Write about one of your country's most famous scientists. Include:*

- some biographical details;
- information about his/her studies;
- what he/she is famous for;
- how he/she has been honoured in your country and/or internationally.

## **Answers**

### **B – Listen and answer**

1. 76 2. Einstein 3. PhD – Mathematics 4. three 5. black holes 6. universe 7. History of Time 8. Charles Darwin

### **C – Read and answer**

1. It left him unable to speak. He was able to communicate only through a speech-generating device. 2. He disliked the fact that it had an American accent. 3. Because they ate while reading books and went around in a converted London taxi. 4. They gave him only two years to live. 5. It broke up in 1995 when he left his wife for his principal nurse. 6. It proved the theory of a Big Bang at the birth of the universe. 7. He and his wife needed money for their children's education and home expenses. 8. Because they think it's a book that people buy but don't read.

### **D – Learn it! Use it!**

1. copes/copied 2. device 3. set his mind 4. insight 5. looked after 6. slightly

### **E – Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English?**

1. physicist 2. illness 3. helpless 4. worsened 5. surrounded 6. theoretical  
7. worldwide 8. increasingly