Bits of News I

Read the following short texts and then show that you have understood them. Mark the best alternative – A, B, C or D.

Texting
The stripped-down form of writing that goes with texting has been with us for more than 120 years, dismissing claims that standards of English are declining. Abbreviations like ‘hw r u’ and ‘I’m pty wl’ were already common in telegraphic communication. A newspaper magazine noted in 1890: “Telegraphers use abbreviations to say considerably more in a certain period of time”.

1 What is said about texting?
   A It is not a present-day innovation
   B It is criticised by many historians
   C It is considered to be poor language
   D It is not fashionable with reporters

Fanatic
A Julia Roberts fanatic has tattooed his body with 82 images of her face, spending a small fortune. It started after he watched her in Erin Brockovich, a film about a legal assistant who brings down a US energy company single handedly. The actress is pictured in artwork inspired by film scenes. As long as he has the space on his body, his tribute will continue, he says.

2 This text is about…
   A an unusual souvenir
   B a well-known movie
   C an expensive interest
   D a talented photographer
**Nutcrackers**

When it comes to birdbrained ideas, the Japanese crow has set a cracking pace. In Japan, learner drivers are not allowed out on to the roads until they have passed their driving tests. Before that, they practise in a sort of grown-up miniature park and the crows have discovered that if they drop walnuts from above the cars and fly down after them, the cars crack open the nuts. The traffic is slow-moving enough for them to land and pick up the pieces.

3. Another suitable title for this item would be...

A. Traffic Problems  
B. Clever Birds  
C. Japanese Theme Park  
D. Driving Tests

4. In Japan the learner drivers have to...

A. pick up pieces of walnuts  
B. crack crow nuts  
C. practise braking gently  
D. train in a special area
Bruno the Swan
There once was an ugly duckling, but when this particular bird grew into a handsome swan he was not admired for his beauty, but feared for his viciousness. Bruno, a black swan from Australia, was obtained as a substitute for another swan killed by a fox. He soon began to make his presence felt by attacking patients, nurses and doctors at Conquest Hospital. Soon, anyone passing the lake on the grounds of the hospital at Hastings, East Sussex, became his victim and warning signs were put up. After Bruno was given a final chance, he went for the former mayor of nearby Rye, Robert Beckwith, who said: “The bird attacked me from behind and hauled me to the ground. It was very powerful so I kicked it in the chest to get it off. It then chased others around the lake and nurses had to help them escape.” Bruno and his mate have now been removed to a sanctuary at Egham, Surrey. The hospital is to replace them with two hand-reared swans.

5 Another suitable title for the text is…
A The Ugly Black Swan
B The Fate of a Savage Swan
C Swan Saved by Mayor
D Swan Attacked by Doctor

6 What is true about Bruno?
A He is a character in a fairy tale
B He fought with his mates
C He was nasty to people
D He was nearly killed by a fox

7 What happened to Bruno in the end?
A He was taken to an animal refuge
B He was chased off the hospital grounds
C He was put to sleep at Egham
D He escaped to the other side of the lake