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| <i>900 exercises in vocational communication</i> | SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT Page 1 | Category D Level 3 |
| | Suggested answers | |

PART 1

You have seen an advertisement for a house to let for a week at the seaside off-season. You are interested in it for April as you have 2 weeks' leave.

Holiday hse to let, reas. price Mar to May. All mod cons. Gdn.

You phone the newspaper to ask for information. They put you on to the owner, Mr Hoaks, tel. 01404 122830, 25 Pine Tree Avenue, Honiton.

You prefer to write rather than phone, to have something in writing, just in case...

So you write a letter to the owner to ask for more information about the house to let. In your letter, you write out a questionnaire for greater clarity. You hope that the owner will answer your questionnaire point by point.

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| <p>Mr HOAKS 25, Pine Tree Avenue Honiton, Devon EX14</p> | <p>18, Bridge Street St Albans, Herts AL3 5PR</p> |
| <p>4 January 08</p> | |
| <p>Dear Sir,</p> <p>I read your advertisement in this week's Economy Magazine, and I would be interested in renting your house near Dawlish. I am writing to you to obtain further information.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the house near the centre of Dawlish? Can you walk there? 2. How far is the house from the beach, and is it a sandy beach? 3. Where is the nearest station? 4. How many bedrooms does the house have? 5. Is the house recently built? 6. Does it have central heating? 7. Would you be willing to let the house for 2 weeks in April? 8. Do you welcome animals (I have 2 house-trained dogs). 9. What down payment would I have to pay to retain the house? <p>Thank you in advance for answering these questions.</p> <p>Yours faithfully,</p> <p>Mark Neville</p> | |

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>900 exercises in vocational communication</i> | SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT Page 2 | Category D Level 3 |
| | Suggested answers | |

You receive an answer which has no bearing on your questionnaire. This is it:

*25 Pine Tree Avenue
Honiton, Devon EX14*

7 January 08

Dear Sir or Madam,

In reply to your letter, I can add the following information. The house, on 2 floors, has all the modern comforts you would expect in a holiday home. On the ground floor, there is a large sitting room with an old-fashioned fireplace, a large kitchen with all the necessary equipment, an electric cooker, a refrigerator, numerous cupboards, a bedroom overlooking the garden, a toilet and a shower room. The first floor has two bedrooms, a bathroom with bath, WC, and cupboards.

In addition to all the essentials, you will also find a microwave oven, a toaster and a television set.


The large garden around the house is ideal for outdoor eating, surrounded by mature trees and flowerbeds. The house is very peaceful. Shops and the beach are nearby.

The rent for 2 weeks off-season is very reasonable, as it does not exceed 800 €, not including gas and electricity costs, of course, as is customary.

As the house is very much in demand in spring, I would appreciate your paying a deposit of half the rent in order to reserve it.

Please would you inform me of your decision as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully,



Arthur Hoaks

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>900 exercises in vocational communication</i> | SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT Page 3 | Category D Level 3 |
| | Suggested answers | |

PART 2

From what you read in the letter, the house seems to correspond to your expectations. You reserve it by sending a letter and the requested deposit. Write the letter to reserve the house.

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| <p><i>Mr HOAKS 25, Pine Tree Avenue Honiton, Devon EX14</i></p> | <p><i>18, Bridge Street St Albans Herts AL3 5PR</i></p> |
| <p><i>8 January 08</i></p> | |
| <p><i>Dear Sir,</i></p> <p><i>Further to your letter of 7 January, I would like to reserve your house in Dawlish for the two weeks from 11 to 25 April 08. As requested, please find enclosed the deposit amounting to half the sum of the rent, i.e. 400 €.</i></p> <p><i>Thank you for the reservation.</i></p> <p><i>Yours faithfully,</i></p> <p><i>Mark Neville</i></p> | |

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>900 exercises in vocational communication</i> | SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT Page 4 | Category D Level 3 |
| | Suggested answers | |

PART 3

You arrive at the house on 3 April and you see immediately that nothing corresponds to what was advertised. The house is dirty and in disrepair, many essentials are missing and some appliances do not work. You would like to be refunded for the deposit or re-housed elsewhere. You phone the number that the newspaper gave you and you get a secretary on the other end. She says that no complaints can be made by phone. You have to send a letter. You therefore write a letter of complaint to the owner.

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| <p><i>Mr HOAKS 25, Pine Tree Avenue Honiton, Devon EX14</i></p> | <p><i>18, Bridge Street St Albans, Herts AL3 5PR</i></p> |
| | <p><i>12 April 08</i></p> |

Dear Sir,

I rented your house in Dawlish for 2 weeks and arrived yesterday evening. Unfortunately, the house in no way corresponds to the description that you gave me in your letter of 7 January last, to the text of your advertisement in Economy Magazine. The house is dirty and in disrepair and some appliances do not work.

I therefore ask either to have my deposit refunded, or to be given another house for the remainder of my holiday.


Yours faithfully,

Mark Neville

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>900 exercises in vocational communication</i> | SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT Page 5 | Category D Level 3 |
| | Suggested answers | |

You receive the following letter by return of post.

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| <p style="text-align: right;"><i>25 Pine Tree Avenue Honiton, Devon EX14</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>14 April 08</i></p> <p><i>Dear Sir or Madam,</i></p> <p><i>In reply to your letter, I would like to inform you that your complaint is quite unacceptable, as the house and its condition correspond exactly to what was advertised. Moreover, we have never received any complaints from previous tenants.</i></p> <p><i>Yours faithfully,</i></p> <p></p> <p><i>Arthur Hoaks</i></p> |
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Given the obvious dishonesty of the owner, you contact a Consumers' Association. On the telephone, the person you speak to, who is very friendly, tells you to prepare a dossier and to send it to the Association.

You are going to prepare the dossier.

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>900 exercises in vocational communication</i> | SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT Page 6 | Category D Level 3 |
| | Suggested answers | |

PART 4

To begin with, you went round all the rooms in the house and then the garden and you took the following notes:

| House is dirty, stuffy and smells of damp. | |
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| Hall | Lamp in ceiling not working (can see nothing when you go in!) |
| Sitting room | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - damp on walls - paper peeling off under the window - electric radiator does not work - TV does not work (sound but no picture) - sofa sagging on the right (you can feel the springs!) - curtain on left-hand window torn |
| Kitchen | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - micro-wave does not work - only 3 plates and 1 saucepan - no frying pan - cutlery twisted and unusable - plastic tablecloth full of cigarette burns |
| Bedroom (Ground floor) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no curtains at the windows - bed very old and uncomfortable - blanket dirty, stained and even mouldy in places |
| Bedroom (1 st floor) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lino torn (danger of tripping) - bedside lamp broken (no light) |
| Bathroom | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - bath: shower hose leaks - basin blocked |
| Garden | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - grass not cut (grass is 50 cm high) - no garden chairs or table for eating outside - no trees nor flowerbeds |
| House location | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - shops: just one small grocery 1 km away - beach 3 km away |

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>900 exercises in vocational communication</i> | SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT Page 7 | Category D Level 3 |
| | Suggested answers | |

You are now going to write up your notes and put them in order. Write clearly what you took down as notes, giving each part a title.

Hall:

The ceiling light does not work, which means that you can see nothing as you go in!

Sitting room:

There is damp on the walls, the wallpaper is peeling off under the windows. The electric radiator does not work; the television set does not work (there is sound but no picture). The sofa sags on the right (you can feel the springs!) and the curtain at the window on the left is torn.

Kitchen:

The microwave oven does not work. There are only three plates, one saucepan and no frying pan. The cutlery is twisted and unusable. The plastic tablecloth has cigarette burns.

Ground floor bedroom:

There are no curtains at the window. The bed is very old and uncomfortable. The blanket is dirty, stained and even mouldy in places.

1st floor bedroom: *The lino is torn, which might be dangerous. The bedside lamp is broken and there is no light.*

Bathroom:

In the bath, the shower hose leaks. The basin is blocked.

Garden:

The lawn is not mown and the grass is 50 cm high. There are no garden chairs or table to sit or eat outside and there are neither the trees nor flowerbeds that were advertised.

Surroundings:

There are no shops nearby, just a small grocer's 1 km away. As for the beach, it is 3 km from the house.

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 900 exercises in vocational communication | SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT Page 8 | Category D Level 3 |
| | Suggested answers | |

PART 5

You spoke to the grocer of your disappointment. This is what he answered.

“Ah well mate, I can tell you you’re not the first person to have problems with this place. Let me think... when was it?... Yes, that’s right! It was May last year. A young couple with a little baby rented that dreadful place... I think... yes, that’s it! For 2 weeks, just like you! Well, when they got here, they were so upset that they came to see me. but then, I am your nearest shop, aren’t I? If you can talk about “near” when it’s a good kilometre. Anyway, they showed me the house. Couldn’t believe my eyes! The owner flatly refused to refund their down payment. They left after 4 days. Then there was that other family. You remember, Gwen (that’s my wife, she’s out the back). The parents with their 3 kids. A teenager, bit difficult he was, and two youngsters, twins, nice kids, well brought up. Anyway, they’d booked for the whole of July. A whole month, can you imagine! At high season prices, too! Well, anyway, it was summer, the damp, the heating not working, it didn’t matter so much. But 3 plates for 5 people! They spent the month eating out of paper plates they bought from my shop and they bought a frying pan and saucepans that they took with them when they left. Then there was that bloke in October. Not one to talk, him. But after a week of coming to buy stuff in my shop, he started talking. He told me all the problems. He’d rented for the whole of October hoping to write a book by the sea in the autumn. Don’t know if he ended up writing his book, but he left after 2 weeks with an awful cold and sued the owner. I don’t know what happened after that. So there you are, you see... you’re not the only ones!”

To complete your dossier for the Association, you are going to sum up what the grocer said in 7 to 10 lines.

The grocer, whose shop is 1 km from the house, told me that I was not the first person to complain about this house. Last May, a young couple with a baby had rented the house for 2 weeks. They left after 4 days and did not manage to get their down payment refunded. A family with 3 children had booked the house for the whole of July last year. They had to buy paper plates and some kitchen utensils that they took home with them when they left. Finally, in October, a man who had rented for the whole month left after only 2 weeks with a heavy cold. He is suing the owner.

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 900 exercises in vocational communication | SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT Page 9 | Category D Level 3 |
| | Suggested answers | |

PART 6

You are now going to make a chart to show what did not correspond to your expectations. To do this, you are going to take up the promises of the first letter from the owner and write opposite what you actually found there.

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| <i>The house, on 2 floors, has all the modern comforts you would expect in a holiday home.</i> | <i>There is no comfort in this house. It is damp and the heating does not work in the sitting room.</i> |
| <i>On the ground floor, there is a large sitting room with an old-fashioned fireplace, a large kitchen with all the necessary equipment, an electric cooker, a refrigerator, numerous cupboards, a bedroom overlooking the garden, a toilet and a shower room.</i> | <i>The kitchen is not equipped for a family. 3 plates and one saucepan (no frying pan) do not allow you to prepare meals.</i> |
| <i>The first floor has two bedrooms, a bathroom with bath, WC, and cupboards.</i> | <i>One of the bedrooms is unusable: there is no light and the torn lino is very dangerous as it could make someone trip.</i> |
| <i>In addition to all the essentials, you will also find a microwave oven, a toaster and a television set.</i> | <i>The microwave oven and the television do not work.</i> |
| <i>The large garden around the house is ideal for outdoor eating, surrounded by mature trees and flowerbeds.</i> | <i>You cannot eat outside without a minimum of chairs and a table. But there were none. Nor are there any flowerbeds. On the other hand, the grass is 50 cm high.</i> |
| <i>Shops and beach nearby.</i> | <i>The only shop is a small grocer's which is 1 km from the house, and the beach is 3 km away. You cannot call that nearby.</i> |

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

| | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------|
| <i>900 exercises in vocational communication</i> | SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT Page 10 | Category D Level 3 |
| | Suggested answers | |

PART 7

To complete your dossier, you are going to make a list of what you expect the owner to do by way of compensation and what you would like the Association to do. Think about your own situation and that of the previous tenants, but also about those who might be tricked in the same way in the future. Note down at least 3 ideas.

- *The owner has to refund the down payment I gave him.*
- *He must pay me damages of 100 € for ruining my 2 weeks' holiday.*
- *He must do the necessary repairs if he wants to let it again.*
- *The newspaper should not permit advertisements without proof that they are not misleading.*
- *The previous tenants should be contacted so that they can also ask for damages.*

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

| | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------|
| 900 exercises in vocational communication | SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT Page 11 | Category D Level 3 |
| | Suggested answers | |

PART 8

You have left the house and returned home. When you get home, you find an email from a friend who does not yet know about your misadventure.

Hi! I really liked your idea of renting a house at the seaside off-season. It's less expensive and you avoid the holiday crowds. I hope you had a great time. I'm going to do the same, as I've just seen a really interesting ad. I'm going to book for the beginning of May. See you soon! Alex.

You phone your friend immediately, but no one answers. So you send him an email in reply to his. In this email, you are going to describe what happened to you. Then you give him very clear instructions so that he does not get taken in... you are also going to send as an attachment what you are going to ask of the owner. In your email, you are therefore going to explain in a few words to your friend why you want to obtain what you are asking for from the owner.

Hi Alex!

I tried to phone you but no one answered. I had an awful time with this house to let. It was nothing like the advertisement. I couldn't stay there for my holidays! Other people have been had before me. So it's obviously quite common! I'm now asking the owner to refund my down payment. The price was much too high for the bad quality of the house. I'm also asking him for damages, since my holidays have been ruined because of the misleading description of the place.

So take my advice: ask the owner to send you a photo of the house you want to rent, and you'll get some idea of what it's like. You should pay a minimum deposit to reserve it, saying, for example, that you'll pay the rest when you get there. Whatever you do, don't pay half the asking price, which is what I did! If the house is not suitable and if you don't agree with the owner, you should immediately get in touch with the Consumers' Association who will take the necessary steps. Good luck! See you soon!

Mark

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

| | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------|
| <i>900 exercises in vocational communication</i> | SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT Page 12 | Category D Level 3 |
| | Suggested answers | |

PART 9

The Consumers' Association works with a magazine. This magazine regularly publishes articles about various swindles that consumers are victims of. The Association asks you to write a text about your misadventure so that they can publish it in the magazine.

You are now going to write **the plan** of this text for your future article.

An attractive advertisement

The misleading "all-purpose" letter

A guided visit of the house

No out-of-court settlement

The Association's help

END OF THE SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT
