

DRACULA

Published in 1897 by Irish writer Bram Stoker, the novel *Dracula*, translated into many languages including Irish, has never been out of print. The figure of Count Dracula has dominated twentieth-century culture, and the novel has inspired over 700 films. It is astonishing that a single novel should have become such a phenomenon.

Bram Stoker did not invent the vampire. Vampires appear in the folklore and legends of many cultures dating back to ancient times. Interest in vampires within the English-speaking world can be traced back to 1732, when the word *vampyre* first appeared in this language. The occasion was a wave of vampire sightings reported and documented in several parts of Central and Eastern Europe and eventually reported in the British press.

The attention given to vampirism coincided with a rising interest in Gothic literature, first in Germany and later (during the last decades of the eighteenth century) in England, where Gothic writers soon adopted the vampire. The first in English literature to do so were poets, but the most important contribution came from an unlikely source: Lord Byron's personal physician, John Polidori. He wrote the first piece of vampire fiction in the English language.

Interest in vampire literature continued through the nineteenth century with the appearance of several short stories and novels, but it was *Dracula* that became the yardstick for future vampires. Bram Stoker combined several of the elements of early vampire fiction with the results of research into vampire folklore—and added a few of his own. Although Stoker had never visited Transylvania, his descriptions of that enchantingly beautiful Eastern European region are astonishingly vivid. Because of his novel and the proliferation of *Dracula* movies, the *Dracula* myth became firmly established.

What about the name *Dracula*? Contrary to popular opinion, Bram Stoker knew very little about the real *Dracula*. All we know for sure is that he found the name *Dracula* in an obscure history book he borrowed from the public library in the English seaside resort of Whitby where he was spending a summer vacation in 1890. He was already working on a vampire novel, and had even selected a name for his Count: *Vampyr*. Then he saw the name *Dracula* with a footnote that suggested it came from a Romanian word for *devil*. As this suited Stoker's conception of his vampire, he appropriated the name, and *Dracula* became a vampire. However, Stoker did not live long enough to see the tremendous success of his novel. The book that made Bram Stoker famous has eclipsed Stoker himself and become undisputedly the world's eternal Gothic novel.

What is it about the vampire in general and about Count *Dracula* in particular that continues to fascinate? There is no simple answer, as the appeal goes across the whole spectrum of human interest. For some it is the seductive element, for others it is the connection with the dark side of our natures. The vampire symbolizes for many the breaking of taboos, the challenge of authority, the fine line between power and passion, and the search for immortality and eternal youth. While Stoker's *Dracula* was the embodiment of evil, late 20th century vampires have become more ambivalent creatures, a clear reflection of the disappearing line between good and evil in our increasingly secularized world.

(Adapted from several sources)

sighting: observació, vista / observación, vista

yardstick: model, patró / modelo, patrón

Gothic novel: novel·la gòtica (novel·la que conté elements romàntics i de terror) / novela gòtica (novela que contiene elementos románticos y de terror)

embodiment: encarnació, representació concreta d'una cosa / encarnación, representación concreta de una cosa

Sèrie 3 - A

PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Choose the best answer.

[0,5 points each correct answer]

1. *Dracula*, the novel, was first written in...
 - a) English.
 - b) Romanian.
 - c) Irish.

2. Who brought interest in vampires to England?
 - a) Lord Byron's physician.
 - b) Ireland's politicians travelling to the continent.
 - c) British popular newspapers.

3. Who wrote the first vampire novel in English?
 - a) Lord Byron.
 - b) Bram Stoker.
 - c) John Polidori.

4. Only one of the following statements is true according to the text. Which one?
 - a) Stoker became very rich after publishing *Dracula*.
 - b) Stoker wrote three other famous Gothic novels.
 - c) Stoker was unfamiliar with the actual details of a vampire's real life.

5. Only one of the following statements is true according to the text. Which one?
 - a) The novel combines ancient vampire stories with other components.
 - b) The novel has inspired many film directors and song composers.
 - c) Transylvania was a legendary country in the South of Europe.

6. Where did Bram Stoker find the name *Dracula*?
 - a) He looked it up in a Romanian encyclopedia.
 - b) He found it in a poem by chance.
 - c) He found it in an old history book.

7. What is the main reason why *Dracula* still attracts so many people?
 - a) Because of a whole combination of elements, each of which fascinates humans.
 - b) Mainly because of the seductive nature of the main character in the book.
 - c) One reason predominates: the myth of eternal youth that *Dracula* so well represents.

8. Which of these options is true according to the text?
 - a) *Dracula* is the biggest selling novel in the world and is the only novel that has always been constantly reprinted.
 - b) *Dracula's* phenomenal influence on the world of the arts and the performing arts is simply incalculable.
 - c) Although it has inspired (and continues to inspire) countless creative works, critics consider *Dracula* poor writing.

PART TWO: WRITING

Choose **one** topic. Write about either 1 or 2. Minimum length: 100 words.

[0-4 points]

1. Write a review (summary and opinion) of a horror film you have seen or a horror story you have read recently.
2. Imagine you are a novelist working on a vampire novel. Write a letter to a friend explaining your ideas.

PROVA AUDITIVA

CLOWN

Introduction

In this radio programme you are going to hear some new words. Read and listen to them. Make sure you know what they mean.

starve: tenir fam, morir-se de gana / estar hambriento, morir-se de hambre

schedule: programa, horari / programa, horario

shed light: il·luminar, projectar llum / iluminar, projectar luz

willing: desitjós de, disposat a / deseoso de, dispuesto a

Ready?

Now read the questions slowly before listening to the radio programme.

CLOWN

Welcome to *A different world*, a program about people working for a world full of understanding and solidarity.

Today it's our pleasure to interview Peter Blissful. Peter is an active member of Clowns Without Limits, a non-profitable organisation formed by clowns and comedians from all over the world. They are volunteers who travel to countries at war trying to give children and adults a chance to laugh, to forget for a while all the sadness and the sufferings of their lives.

PRESENTER: Welcome to *A different world*, Mr. Blissful. We have received hundreds of calls in advance. Our audience is delighted to have you with us today.

PETER: It is always a pleasure to visit a program which cares so much about people in need of help and support.

[Now listen to the rest of the interview]

QUESTIONS

Choose the most appropriate answer according to the text. Only one answer is correct. Look at number 0 as an example.

[0,25 points each correct answer]

0. Clowns Without Limits is an organization...
- of clowns working in places of conflict.
 - which represents the interests of clowns worldwide.
 - which finds new young clowns to find professional opportunities.
-
1. In this interview, Peter Blissful wishes he would be...
- working in a country where children need his help.
 - working in a simple circus in a peaceful town.
 - doing his job in front of a peaceful audience.
2. Peter Blissful has worked with Clowns Without Limits in countries such as:
- Croatia, Bosnia, Salvador, Ruanda and Kosovo.
 - Croatia, Bosnia, Chile, East Serbia and West Timor.
 - Bosnia, East Timor, Salvador and Nicaragua.
3. The group of clowns he works with...
- give *solo* performances very often.
 - act only in group, never separatedly.
 - doesn't give *solo* shows very often.
4. How does Clowns Without Limits get financial support?
- Through the United Nations and the contribution of the USA.
 - Mostly through membership fees and TV advertising.
 - Through the UNESCO, membership fees and merchandising.
5. Do governments in the countries in conflict make the job of the organization easy?
- Most of them don't.
 - Some of them don't.
 - Most of them do.
6. Why were Peter Blissful and his troupe once detained?
- Because the government was afraid they could tell the world the poor conditions of a camp of refugees.
 - Because they had hundreds of photographs of the camp where they had performed.
 - Because the government was afraid they could see the conditions in the camp of refugees.
7. Why wasn't the affair made public?
- Because the war was almost over.
 - Because refugees might suffer as a result of it.
 - Because the government apologized to the troupe immediately.
8. What would Peter Blissful like to do if his job in Clowns Without Limits was no longer necessary?
- He would join this radio programme every week.
 - He would travel around the world looking for more refugees.
 - He would tell stories about refugee camps.

I WAS BORN A SLAVE

My name is Salma. I was born a slave in Mauritania in 1956. My parents were slaves, and their parents were slaves of the same family. As soon as I was old enough to walk, I was forced to work all day, every day of the week. Even if we were sick, we had to work.

When I was still a child, I started taking care of the first wife of the head of the family and her 15 children. Later, even if one of my own children was hurt or in danger, I didn't dare help my child because I had to care for the master's wife's children first. I was beaten very often with a wooden stick or a leather belt. One day they started beating my mother, and I couldn't stand it. I tried to stop them. The head of the family got very angry with me. He tied my hands, branded me with a burning iron and hit me across the face. His ring cut my face and left a scar.

I was never allowed to go to school or learn anything more than some religious verses and prayers. But I was lucky, because the eldest son of my master had gone to school away from our village and had different ideas from his father. This eldest son secretly taught me to speak French and to read and write a little. I think that everyone thought he was raping me, but he was teaching me and doing it well.

Other slaves were afraid of liberty. They were afraid they wouldn't know where to go or what to do. But I always believed that I had to be free. I tried to escape about ten years ago. I didn't know how close I was to Senegal, so I walked for two days in the wrong direction. I was found and sent back, and then punished. My wrists and ankles were bound first, then I was tied to a date tree in the middle of the family compound, and left there for a week. The head of the family cut my wrists with a razor, and as a result I bled terribly. I still have scars on my arms.

Finally I met a man in the market who told me that Senegal was just across the border. I decided I had to try again. I ran to the river, where a man with a small wooden boat agreed to take me to Senegal. There I made my way to a safe house run by a former slave from Mauritania. I stayed in Senegal for a few weeks, earning my keep by doing housework. But I never felt safe. I was always afraid that the master of the family I had escaped from would pay people to find me and bring me back to his house.

When I got to the U.S., I worked braiding hair. The first time I was paid for work I had done. I cried. I had never seen a person paid for her work before in my life. It was a very good surprise.

(From the press. Adapted)

to brand: marcar amb ferro candent / marcar con hierro candente

compound: clos, recinte / cercado, recinto

earn my keep: treballar per pagar el menjar i l'allotjament / trabajar para pagar la comida y el alojamiento

to braid: trenar / trenzar

Série 1 - A

PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Choose the best answer.

[0,5 points each correct answer]

1. Salma and her parents were forced to work all day and every day...
 - a) except when they were ill.
 - b) no matter if they were ill or not.
 - c) when their own children were in danger.

2. The head of the family got very angry with Salma...
 - a) the day she hit him across the face.
 - b) when she once tried to defend her mother.
 - c) when she refused to learn some prayers.

3. «I think that everyone thought *he* was raping me». Who was *he*?
 - a) Her master's son.
 - b) Her master's father.
 - c) Her master.

4. Salma was different from the other slaves because...
 - a) she could read and write good French.
 - b) they were happy to be slaves.
 - c) she was not afraid of freedom.

5. The first time Salma escaped, she...
 - a) followed a wrong path.
 - b) couldn't walk very far.
 - c) found the border closed.

6. From Salma's story we can guess that in Senegal...
 - a) there was no slavery.
 - b) everybody would help slaves from Mauritania.
 - c) Salma bought her freedom.

7. How many people were kind and helpful to Salma altogether?
 - a) Two.
 - b) Four.
 - c) Five.

8. What was a very good surprise for Salma when she got to the U.S.?
 - a) She didn't have to do any more housework.
 - b) Americans did not know about hair braiding.
 - c) She was paid money for the work she did there.

PART TWO: WRITING

Choose **one** topic. Write about either 1 or 2. Minimum length: 100 words.

[0-4 points]

1. Salma is an American citizen now. Write an interview for Black Hope magazine in which she tells how her dreams (freedom, a good job, bringing her kids to the U.S. ...) all came true.
2. You have read Salma's story in a magazine. Write a letter to the president of Mauritania telling him what you think about slavery.

PROVA AUDITIVA

ORPHANS OF THE STORM

Introduction

Hi,
In this radio programme, you are going to hear the following words. Read and listen to them. Make sure you know what they mean.

AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome): sida

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus): virus de la immunodeficiència humana adquirida, causant de la sida / virus de la immunodeficiència humana adquirida, causante del sida

UN (United Nations): Nacions Unides / Naciones Unidas

shift: desplaçament / desplazamiento

sleepwalk: somnambulisme / sonambulismo

stunting: raquitisme, manca de creixement / raquitismo, falta de crecimiento

Ready?

Now read the questions on the next page. Read them carefully before listening to the radio programme.

ORPHANS OF THE STORM

In medicine, 20 years is a long time to be at war. It is now 2 decades since scientists identified the cause of AIDS: HIV —«a strange new syndrome devastating immune systems and destroying lives». Within this period, many things have happened. For some, the prognosis is good, for others the future will bring only disaster. To discuss the present and the future of AIDS we have a panel of 3 public-health experts: Dr. Nora Smith, Jean Roberts, journalist, and Ray Rob, a UN inspector.

PRESENTER: What's the current situation, Ray? Do you have any statistics?

RAY: In its 2003 report UNAIDS, the United Nations agency estimated that 40m people are infected with HIV and that 2,5m of them are children. In 2003 alone, 5m were newly infected.

[Now listen to the rest of the interview]

QUESTIONS

Answer these questions according to the text. Choose the correct answer. Only one is correct.
Look at number 0 as an example.
[0,25 points each correct answer]

0. Scientists identified the HIV virus...

- twenty years ago.
 - during the last decade.
 - at some unknown point in the last thirty years.
-

1. Between 1999 and 2003 the number of people who died from AIDS...

- didn't vary.
- went up.
- went down.

2. The balance of AIDS-infected population has shifted from...

- white, rich and homosexual to poor, black heterosexual feminine.
- gay to heterosexual, independently of race and wealth.
- a general population of intravenous-drug users to African drug-addict women.

3. As for the present situation, there is...

- no hope: we don't see the end of the tunnel yet.
- some hope: we are at a critical moment when things may start changing.
- almost no hope: leaders are still silent and apathetic as they were in the 1990s.

4. Drug-experimentation periods are becoming shorter because...

- generics are replacing expensive drugs almost everywhere.
- there are many more voluntaries than before.
- there is less money available for laboratory assessment.

5. South Africa...

- is a very good example of good health policy.
- has managed to contain AIDS better than any other country in the world.
- is the country with the largest population of HIV-infected people.

6. Experts predict that...

- in some African places 50% of the people may be killed by the virus.
- the worst is over and the main thing to fear now is economic disaster.
- epidemics are already under control.

7. What's the number of orphan children as a result of AIDS?

- One in ten.
- One out of three.
- Eleven million.

8. AIDS-orphans...

- are encouraged to attend school but they reject it.
- quite often find in prostitution their only source of food and money.
- often become good parents because of their hard and cruel sufferings.