



3C

BONSAI

MATCHING INFORMATION

- 1 Read the statements think about the main idea, then think about key words and synonyms.
- 2 SKIM the text to get the general idea of what each paragraph is about
- 3 Decide which statement you think will be the easiest to match.
- 4 SCAN the text for key words and synonyms.
- 5 When you think you've identified the paragraph containing the information, read it in detail to check that you're right.
- 6 Write the letter of that paragraph on your answer sheet and cross out that option from the list of statements.



suggested time
9 minutes

TASK

The text on "Bonsai" on the following page has eight paragraphs labelled **A – H**.

Which paragraphs contain the following information?

Write the correct letter **A – H** in boxes **1 – 6** of your answer sheet.

- Example** What kind of trees are suitable D
- 1) The cultural influences on bonsai _____
 - 2) How bonsai trees are shown to the viewer _____
 - 3) A discussion about the meaning of a word _____
 - 4) The purposes of the art form. _____
 - 5) Something which is not needed. _____
 - 6) The rules and principles of the tradition _____

Bonsai

A

Although many of us are familiar with the idea of bonsai trees, few people outside of Japan have an understanding of the cultural tradition surrounding them. In English, the word 'bonsai' has become an umbrella term for many forms of potted or other plants, and also on occasion to other living and non-living things. However, in Japanese, 'bonsai', which literally means 'tray planting', refers to miniaturized, container-grown trees adhering to Japanese tradition and principles.

B

The art form of bonsai utilizes cultivation techniques to produce, in containers, small trees that mimic the shape and scale of full size trees. Purposes of bonsai are primarily contemplation for the viewer, and the pleasant exercise of effort and ingenuity for the grower. By contrast with other plant cultivation practices, bonsai is not intended for production of food or for medicine. Instead, bonsai practice focuses on long-term cultivation and shaping of individual trees.

C

The practice of bonsai is sometimes confused with dwarfing (the research, discovery, or creation of plants that are permanent, genetic miniatures of existing species), but plant dwarfing often uses selective breeding or genetic engineering to create dwarf cultivars. Bonsai does not require genetically dwarfed trees, but rather depends on growing small trees from regular stock and seeds. Bonsai uses cultivation techniques like pruning, root reduction, potting, defoliation, and grafting to produce small trees that mimic the shape and style of mature, full-size trees.

D

A bonsai is created beginning with a specimen of source material. This may be a cutting, seedling, or small tree of a species suitable for bonsai development. **Bonsai can be created from nearly any perennial woody-stemmed tree or shrub species that produces true branches and can be cultivated to remain small through pot confinement with crown and root pruning.** Some species are popular as bonsai material because they have characteristics, such as small leaves or needles, that make them appropriate for the compact visual scope of bonsai.

E

When the candidate bonsai nears its planned final size it is usually planted in a pot designed for bonsai display in one of a few accepted shapes and proportions. From that point forward, its growth is restricted by the pot environment. Throughout the year, the bonsai is shaped to limit growth, redistribute foliage to areas requiring further development, and meet the artist's detailed design.

F

Bonsai dates back over a thousand years and its aesthetics are informed by many Japanese cultural characteristics, in particular by Zen Buddhism and *Wabi-sabi*; a world view centered on the acceptance of transience and imperfection. The aesthetic is sometimes described as one of beauty that is 'imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete',

G

Over centuries of practice, the bonsai aesthetic has encoded some important techniques and design guidelines. Simply following the guidelines alone will not guarantee a successful result. Nevertheless, they can rarely be broken without reducing the impact of the bonsai specimen. Apart from miniturisation, key concepts in bonsai aesthetics include aesthetically pleasing proportions and asymmetry. Additionally, the designer's touch must not be apparent to the viewer. If a branch is removed in shaping the tree, the scar will be concealed.

H

When bonsai are displayed, specimens are placed in a way that allows a viewer to see all the important features of the bonsai from the most advantageous position. That position emphasizes the bonsai's defined "front", which is designed into all bonsai. It places the bonsai at a height that allows the viewer to imagine the bonsai as a full-size tree seen from a distance, siting the bonsai neither so low that the viewer appears to be hovering in the sky above it nor so high that the viewer appears to be looking up at the tree from beneath the ground.