

## Reading comprehension

Read the following text and then answer the questions below, using words of your own.



## Dublin

Dublin is the capital and largest city in the Republic of Ireland, situated at the mouth of the river Liffey. It is widely believed that Dublin was founded by the Vikings as a centre for their slave trade and today has a population of roughly half a million. The motto of the city is "Happy is the city where citizens obey".

Dublin has a relatively mild climate due to its proximity to the sea. The average January temperature is 8°C while that of July is 20°C. The wettest month is December with an average rainfall of 76mm, whereas the driest is February with a mere 50mm! In any case it's probably best to bring an umbrella.

The River Liffey runs right through the centre of the city and acts as a natural divide between the north and the south. A north/south rivalry exists in the city, with the north being considered working class and the south as middle to upper class. This division is even reflected in the city's postal districts – the north has odd numbers and the south has even ones.

Dublin is a significant cultural centre. Many great artists and writers were or are from here, such as James Joyce,

whose works include the renowned and controversial Ulysses, Oscar Wilde, whose wit is legendary, Samuel Beckett, Bram Stoker, author of arguably the most famous horror novel of all time, *Dracula*, and more recently award-winning *Roddy Doyle*. Dublin is also home to The National Gallery of Ireland, The Irish Museum of Modern Art, the National Print Museum of Ireland as well as a large number of theatres and Arts Centres. Ireland has enjoyed a considerable degree of economic success since the mid 1990's which has helped it reverse the traditional migratory trend. Young people used to leave Ireland, mainly in search of work but now it actually welcomes immigrants, especially to Dublin.

These immigrants are mainly from the UK, the US, Australia and New Zealand although there is a rising number of non-native English speakers arriving, especially from China, Korea, India, Nigeria and eastern Europe. In 2006 Dublin was ranked the 16th most expensive city in the world with the 24th best quality of life.

Dublin boasts two impressive sports stadiums. The first, Croke Park is where exclusively Irish games are

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played - Gaelic football and hurling. The second, Lansdowne Road until 2006 was the world's oldest still functional sports stadium and home to the Irish football and rugby teams. Any visit to or mention of Dublin wouldn't be complete without mentioning that most famous of stouts - Guinness. You either love it or hate it, but you can't ignore it. It has been brewed at the St James's Gate Brewery since 1759, where you can visit with a guided tour and trip to the bar to sample it as it should be. It's a must. If you get a taste for 'the black

stuff' you can carry on with your 'research' in Dublin's famous Temple Bar district. This vibrant area is jammed full with bars, pubs and restaurants and music and singing help to create a buzzing atmosphere. On any given weekend you'll find hen and stag parties, groups of all men or all women celebrating their final days of being single before they get married. Unfortunately this has become especially popular with parties from the UK and it gets a bit too crowded so most locals actually avoid this area at the weekends.

1. Who founded Dublin?
2. What did the Vikings predominantly use to buy and sell in Dublin?
3. What is Dublin's climate like?
4. If your postal district is 27, do you live in the north or the south of Dublin?
5. In 2006, how many cities in the world were more expensive than Dublin?
6. Where is Gaelic football played in Dublin?
7. Where is the home of the national rugby team?
8. What type of beer is Guinness?
9. What is Temple Bar?
10. Why is Dublin defined the "cultural centre" of Ireland?