

Select Readings, Second Edition
Elementary, IELTS™-Style Final

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

A Musical Genius

Music teachers in England are surprised by a young man in England who can play very difficult piano pieces just a few minutes after he hears them. Why else are they surprised? He does not read music!

Samuel Osmond is a 19-year-old law student from Cornwall, England. He never studied the piano. However, he can play very difficult musical pieces by composers¹ such as Chopin and Beethoven just a few minutes after he hears them.

He learns a piece of music by listening to it in parts. Then he thinks about the notes² in his head. Two years ago, he played his first piece *Moonlight Sonata* by Beethoven. He surprised everyone around him.

His teachers were amazed that he memorized this long and difficult piece of music and played it perfectly. Samuel wanted to become a lawyer, but music teachers told him he should study music instead. Now, he studies law and music.

His teachers say Samuel is unbelievable. They say his ability is very rare, but Samuel doesn't even realize that what he can do is special.

Samuel can't understand why everyone is so surprised. "I grew up with music. My mother played piano and I played guitar for six years. About two years ago, I suddenly decided to start playing the piano, without being able to read music and without having any lessons. It comes easily to me—I hear the notes and can memorize them—each individual note." says Samuel.

Experts say that Samuel has 'note perfect memory,' which means he can play very difficult pieces of music just by listening to them. They say that people with this kind of memory are extremely rare.

Recently, Samuel performed a piece during a special event at his college. The piece had more than a thousand notes. The audience was impressed by his amazing performance. He is now learning a piece that is so difficult that many professional pianists³ cannot play it. Samuel says, "It's all about the ability to memorize—I guess I have that ability."

However, Samuel's ability to memorize doesn't stop with music. His family says that even when he was a young boy, Samuel heard someone read a story, and then Samuel could retell⁴ the story word for word.

Samuel is still only a teenager. He doesn't know what he wants to do in the future. For now, he is just happy to play beautiful music and continue his studies.

QUESTIONS 1–4

The Reading Passage has 10 paragraphs A–J.

Which paragraph contains the following information?

Write the correct letter A–J in boxes 1–5 on your answer sheet.

¹ **composers** people who write music

² **notes** musical sounds

³ **pianists** piano players

⁴ **retell** to tell again

- 1 the kind of memory that helps Samuel learn music
- 2 what Samuel plans for his future
- 3 how Samuel started with music
- 4 other things Samuel can memorize
- 5 Samuel performs for his classmates

QUESTIONS 6–9

Do the following statements agree with the information given in the Reading Passage?

In boxes 6–9 on your answer sheet, write

- TRUE** if the statement agrees with the information
FALSE if the statement contradicts the information
NOT GIVEN if there is no information on this

- 6 Samuel played the guitar for six years.
- 7 Samuel doesn't know what he wants to do in the future.
- 8 Samuel's mother taught him to play piano.
- 9 Samuel's father plays the guitar as well.

QUESTIONS 10–12

Complete the summary of the reading. Choose ONE word from the Reading Passage for each blank.

Samuel Osmond, a young man in England, has an amazing musical **(10)**_____.

Samuel amazed his teachers by playing *Moonlight Sonata*, even though he can't read music.

Samuel can play difficult **(11)**_____ of music on the piano just minutes after he hears them. Samuel has 'note perfect memory'—the very rare ability to play music after hearing it. Samuel doesn't understand why so many people are amazed at his ability. For now, he just plans to **(12)**_____ to study and play music.

QUESTIONS 13–15

Choose the correct letter, **A**, **B**, **C**, or **D**. Write your answers in boxes 13–15 on your answer sheet.

- 13 Samuel learns music by listening to it
 - A in parts.
 - B while sitting at a piano.
 - C and writing it down.
 - D by himself.

- 14 Samuel can't understand why
 - A everyone is surprised at his piano ability.
 - B why his teachers want him to study music.
 - C he can't read music like his teachers.

D there are so many notes for him to learn.

15 Samuel recently performed a piece at his college

A with other professional pianists.

B without memorizing the music.

C that was too difficult for him to play.

D with more than 1,000 notes.