

MODULE 6A

Listening p.56

2a

1 B; 2 B; 3 C; 4 C; 5 A; 6 B; 7 A

Audio script

PR = Presenter; P = Peter

PR: Last year, in a television series called *Faking it*, various people were given four weeks to learn the skills of a new profession. Peter Harris, a painter and decorator from Liverpool, was one of them and he joins me in the studio today. Peter, welcome.

P: Hi.

PR: So why were you selected to take part in the programme, Peter?

P: Well, one day, I got a phone call from someone asking me if I'd like to take part. They'd called lots of decorating companies all over the country looking for someone willing to spend four weeks learning to be an artist, you know instead of painting walls and doors, you'd learn how to do abstract art. And the cameras would be there to see how you got on. But they couldn't get anyone to volunteer. At first, I thought it must be one of my friends playing a joke on me, so I laughed and put the phone down.

PR: Really!

P: But fortunately, they called back and gave me a number at the television company where I could call them and that's when I realised it was for real.

PR: So what did your friends think?

P: They thought it was funny, because I know nothing about art but I think they admired me for giving it a try. Before the filming started, I went down to the local art gallery with them to have a look at some abstract art. To be honest, I thought it was all a load of rubbish, but I still wasn't convinced that I'd actually be able to do it.

PR: So what happened? How did you learn?

P: Well, at first, I actually found it exciting because I never knew what was happening from one day to the next. But basically, I had lessons. And of course I found it was harder than you'd think, especially with the cameras watching. But the worst bit was having to film what's called a video diary every evening saying how the lessons had gone and how I was feeling.

PR: But you enjoyed it?

P: I began to see that there really is something behind abstract art. People look at a painting and say 'What is it?' or 'It's just a load of paint thrown about,' but actually there's a lot more to it than that. I think people laugh at things they don't understand sometimes, but that doesn't mean it's no good. The artist wants you to think, you know, which can be hard work!

PR: Absolutely.

P: Then, one day, I was just painting freely, you know, experimenting, and suddenly I realised that what I'd painted looked like a wheelchair. I'd had a football accident as a child and I couldn't walk for a while. It was a frustrating and frightening time for me. Suddenly all those feelings came back to me. It was so unexpected, and I realised that a part of me was coming out in the painting. It reduced me to tears.

PR: Did other people see the wheelchair?

P: I don't think so, but funnily enough that was one of the pictures that went through to the final programme. The idea was that my paintings would be shown in a gallery alongside lots of real artists' work, and a panel of experts would try and say which ones were mine. It was all part of the idea of the television programme. Anyway, I was fairly determined to prove that I could do it. Lots of people were surprised when three out of four experts failed to spot which paintings were mine. But I was delighted.

PR: So now you're an artist?

P: Sort of, yeah. Actually, since the show, I've sold about 15 paintings which has impressed my family more than anything. And I thought the other artists would really hate me, because they find it so hard to sell their work, but they were fine. No, the only people I didn't like were some of the people who bought my work. They only seemed to be interested in how much it would be worth in the future.

PR: Peter, thank you.

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1 for real; 2 a load of rubbish; 3 bit; 4 hard work; 5 to tears; 6 to spot, delighted; 7 be worth