

Providing Institution:



**CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH**  
Language Assessment  
Part of the University of Cambridge

## Audio transcript

**Now turn to Part 4.**

**You will hear part of an interview with a writer called Angela Tanner. For questions 24 – 30, choose the best answer (A, B or C).**

**You now have one minute to look at Part Four.**

*PAUSE 1 minute*

*Interviewer:* With me today is the children's writer, Angela Tanner. Readers of all ages are attracted to her fantasy books about other worlds. Let's start at the beginning, Angela. Where do you get your ideas for new stories from?

*Angela:* Well, It would be great if I didn't need that, and I could just sit down, as some writers do, and dream up an idea for a new story, but my mind doesn't work like that. I get ideas from articles, about new developments in space exploration, for example, really up-to-date stuff from the experts. I wish I could say that my inspiration comes from what happens to me in everyday life! For most writers, that's what sticks in their minds, and then becomes the beginning of a story.

*Interviewer:* Tell us about a typical writing day. Do you have a routine?

*Angela:* Over the years, I've experimented with different routines but I've never been very good at changing my approach. I always come back to three pages every day as my goal – that's about a thousand words. It may not sound a lot and sometimes I'm finished by lunchtime, but often I'm still writing late into the evening. But I always manage to do my total and it soon builds up. That's the point. It's such a great feeling at the end of each day.

*Interviewer:* Now do you suffer, as many writers do, from what's known as 'writer's block', when you just can't write at all for a while.

*Angela:* Naturally I do. It's difficult to know how to deal with it, but I can assure you the solution isn't just to take no notice of it and carry on writing. A period of rest's what's called for, even though you may feel you can't afford it. Personally I don't believe in seeking the emotional support of a fellow sufferer, but I know it works very well for some writers.

*Interviewer:* The books that have made you famous are fantasy stories. Why did you choose to write this type of fiction?

- Angela:* It's true that my stories take place in fantastic worlds, although I'm not claiming that they exist somewhere out in space. My characters look strange and have unbelievable adventures, which I hope makes for an exciting read. Inside their heads though, they have the same variety of feelings as the average person on **this** planet, so I'm just using a different approach – fantasy – to investigate those.
- Interviewer:* You've often mentioned an English teacher you had in your teens, Miss Griffiths. Why was she important? Did she give you a love of literature?
- Angela:* I'd already developed that enthusiasm by then. But Miss Griffiths taught us to use grammar correctly and also to construct paragraphs and build them up into narrative stories and I loved all that because I found I could do it. She also wrote a play for the school every year and I always took part – it gave me a real feeling of how drama works, which has been very important.
- Interviewer:* I'm interested that you liked grammar. There's a logic in your books and an interest in technical things like clocks...
- Angela:* That's true. I'm fascinated by technical stuff, although I'm totally impractical in real life. Readers say that the gadgets and complex space machines in my stories are based on very uncertain theories – and they're right. But I love looking at traditional clocks, for instance. You can take them apart and see how the pieces fit together. It's like planning the plot of a book. And then you realise, 'If I put that character in there, then later on he can do that'. I find there's a real thrill in that.
- Interviewer:* I've heard that there are plans to turn one of your books into a film. Do you think you'll find that difficult?
- Angela:* Will I worry like a mother when her child goes to school for the first time that no-one will look after him properly? I suspect I'll just watch its progress with keen interest from a distance. Not being a film writer or director, that's all I can do. I'll leave the rest to the specialists. They have the necessary skills, so it'd be pointless getting too involved, wouldn't it?
- Interviewer:* I suppose so. Now what about your ... *[fade]*

**Now you'll hear Part 4 again.**

**REPEAT**

**That's the end of Part Four.**