3. Primary School Days

When John was five years old, he entered primary school. Aunt Mimi was very careful to find the "right" one for her bright little nephew. She visited several schools before picking Dovedale Primary School. It was three miles from their home. To get there, John took a bus that went past Strawberry Field. It let him off on Penny Lane. "Penny Lane" is the title of another very popular Beatles song.

John was unusual even at the age of five. The Dovedale headmaster, Mr. Bolt, saw that right away. At the first parents' meeting, he said to Mimi, "There's no need to worry about John. He's sharp as a needle. But he won't do anything he doesn't want to." What Mr. Bolt said was perfectly true.

Schoolmates who remembered John years later described him as being special. One classmate said that "John was on a different wavelength from the others. "Another classmate remembered John as "an oddball." But he added that John was looked up to by the others.

Most of the children admired John's cartoons, poems, and jokes. They enjoyed the clever new games he made up. And they praised him for his musical talents. John had a harmonica that he played all the time. He never took any formal music lessons. Everything John knew about music was what he taught himself.

There were two things about Dovedale that John did not like. One was the school uniform. All the students had to wear a black woolen jacket with a dove sewed on the pocket. The boys also had to wear a cap, gray short pants, knee socks, and a tie. John thought the jacket and tie were the worst of it. So he wore them in the sloppiest way he could. But he did wear them in order to keep out of trouble.

John also disliked the food served in the school lunchroom. So he did not hand in his lunch money to the teacher, as he was supposed to. Instead, he and a few friends went to Penny Lane for lunch. There, they bought cakes and other goodies. Many years later, John confessed to Aunt Mimi how he spent the lunch money she gave him.

In his years at Dovedale, John never seemed to study hard. But he really did a lot more schoolwork than he let his friends know. It was important to John to have the other kids believe he was tough. He wanted them to think he didn't care about anything. The truth was, he cared about a lot of things. It hurt him deeply when he was teased about not having a father around. It bothered him that he was terrible at arithmetic. He wanted to be the best at everything, but he didn't want anyone to know it.

John was able to hide how smart he was for a while. But the truth came out in 1951 when he had to take an important test. British schoolchildren take a test when they are 11 years old. This test is called "the 11-plus." Students who do very well on the test can go on to a grammar school. In Britain, a grammar school is an upper school for top-level students. Children who do not pass the 11-plus go on to a less difficult kind of school. Only a small number of students pass the 11-plus each year. John did more than just pass the test. He did extremely well on it. That showed he had been working hard all along.

Something 11-year-old John really wanted was a fine bicycle, the kind the older boys rode. Uncle George knew this, and he promised John the bicycle if he passed the 11-plus. Uncle George loved John very much, and he also knew how bright the boy was. So Uncle George bought the bicycle months before John took the test. It was hidden in the house. Then, when the excited youngster came home with the good news, Uncle George said, "I have a surprise for you. It's outside. Why don't you look there?"

John rushed outside and found a shiny, bright green bicycle. Shouting "Thanks!" over his shoulder, John sped off on his marvelous gift. He couldn't wait to show it to his friends. It was the best present young John ever got.

３　EXERCISES A (内容理解)

１　( )に適切な日本語を入れ、本文のあらすじを完成させなさい．

　ジョンは(ア　　　　　)歳のときにダブデイル小学校に入学した．学校は家から(イ　　　　　)マイル離れたところにあり、(ウ　　　　)で通学した．(エ　　　　　)がすぐ見抜いたように、ジョンはたいへん鋭いが(オ　　　　　　　　)な子どもで、同級生の間では、変わっているが一目置かれる存在であった．

　ジョンは小学校の(カ　　　　　)がきらいで、特に(キ　　　　　　　)と(ク )は最悪だと思い、できるだけ(ケ　　　　　)着た．また学校の(コ　　　　　　)もきらいで、その費用を(サ　　　　　　　)に渡さず友人といっしょに(シ　　　　　　)に出かけ(ス　　　　　　　)を買って食べた．

　悪ぶって一見何も気にせず、勝手気ままな生活を送っているように見えたが、実はそうではなかった．(セ　　　　　　　　　)をからかわれると深く傷つき、(ソ　　　　　　　)にも悩んだ．何事でも(タ　　　　　　)と思い、人に知られずに相当に勉強していた．その結果(チ　　　　)歳のとき、上級高校への進学テストで(ツ　　　　　　　)を修め、(テ　　　　　)生徒が通学する(ト　　　　　　　)に進学できた．そして(ナ　　　　　　　)から最もほしかった(ニ　　　　　　　　)をプレゼントされて大喜びした．

２　本文の内容に合うものはT、合わないものにはFを書きなさい．

(1) John had to go to Dovedale Primary School because it was in his neighborhood. ( )

(2) John was so special that few classmates could understand his cartoons, poems, and, jokes. ( )

(3) Everyone knew that John was a lot more hardworking than he looked. ( )

(4) George was sure John would pass the 11-plus. ( )

３　EXERCISES B (文法・語い)

１　( )内の語句のうち正しいほうを選びなさい．

(1) Jane has four children. One is a boy and (ア．others イ．the others) are girls.

(2) The president had his secretary (ア．type イ．typed) his letter.

(3) Someday you will find (ア．that イ．what) I said is true.

(4) (ア．Why イ．How) don't you come with us?

２　日本文の意味に合うように、( )内の語を正しく並べかえなさい．

(1) 彼は目を閉じたまま音楽を聴いていた．

　　He was listening to the music (eyes / with / closed / his).

(2) 彼女は息子にしたいようにさせた．

　　She let her son (to / as / do / wanted / he).

(3) こんな楽しい映画を見たことがない．

　　This is (the / I / ever / amusing / have / most / film) seen.

３　( )に入るべき前置詞を、下のア～エより選びなさい．

(1) You have to work ( ) order to live.

(2) The children were praised ( ) helping the old man.

(3) The captain is looked up ( ) by everyone.

(4) She describes herself ( ) an actress.

(5) The policeman replied ( ) a polite way.

ア．as イ．for ウ．in エ．to

４　( )に１語入れて同じ意味になるようにしなさい．

(1) a few＝a small ( ) of

(2) always＝all the ( )

(3) tell ～＝( ) ～ know

(4) invent＝make ( )