

TEXT 2. Read the text.

'Prison worked' says truants' mother

A WOMAN who was sent to prison because her children didn't go to school, said yesterday that she deserved her prison sentence. Patricia Amos was freed from prison last week after her sentence was reduced from 60 to 28 days. She told reporters that the experience had brought her to her senses and that she would make sure that her children went to school in the future.

Her two children, Emma, 15, and Jackie, 13, had a very bad attendance record at their school in Oxfordshire, and in spite of numerous warning letters and being ordered to appear in court, Mrs Amos allowed her children to stay at home.

After spending time in prison Mrs Amos said that the

experience had taught her a lesson. 'Everybody deserves their education and I was denying my children their rights through my own stupidity and ignorance ... It has brought me to my senses.'

The court heard that Emma was at school 29% of the time. Her sister Jackie had an attendance rate of 34%.

The children have been living with relatives since their mother was sent to prison. Speaking to reporters for the first time, Jackie said: 'I was upset and I was angry at the sentence. I will stay in school from now on.'

Emma added: 'Prison can't have been nice for my mum. I had the most time off and I felt it was all my fault. The court could have punished me instead.

Now mum's coming home. I won't skive off school ever again.'

Mrs Amos said that that everything was all right with the family until her mother died. 'She did everything for us. After she died, I tried to make the kids go to school but they weren't interested. I didn't want to argue with them so I let them do what they wanted. If they refuse to go in the future, I'll drive them there myself.'

Mrs Amos said that her children aren't bad and are certainly not delinquents. And there is one thing that will ensure it does not happen again. She explained: 'The children know that if they play truant again, I will go to prison. None of us want that.'

© The Guardian, 2004

1 Choose the best answer A, B or C.

- 1 Why was Mrs Amos sent to prison? **A** Her children never went to school. **B** Her children often missed school. **C** She didn't look after her children.
- 2 Mrs Amos ... the warning letters. **A** might have answered **B** can't have read **C** should have answered
- 3 The children ... **A** played truant together. **B** rarely played truant. **C** both played truant.
- 4 Emma says they ... have been punished. **A** might **B** can't **C** should
- 5 The children say they ... go to school in the future. **A** will **B** should **C** might
- 6 The children lived with Mrs Amos's **A** sisters. **B** parents. **C** family.
- 7 When Mr Amos's mother died, she didn't ... **A** make the children go to school. **B** want the children to go to school. **C** cook or clean the house.
- 8 The children will now go to school because they ... **A** want to get a good education. **B** don't want to go to prison. **C** don't want their mother to go to prison.

2 Match the words and phrases in A with the meanings in B.

- | A | B |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 9 a sentence | a to make someone think clearly |
| 10 numerous | b to learn from an experience |
| 11 to bring to (his) senses | c not stopped by something |
| 12 in spite of | d a student who stays away from school without permission |
| 13 to teach (someone) a lesson | e young criminals |
| 14 a truant | f punishment given by a court of law |
| 15 delinquents | g lots of |