What a sound

It was good news for the Queen that a well known conductor was staying in the capital, because she was very fond of music. She ordered him to arrange an orchestral concert which should take place on her birthday. Feeling that his reputation was at stake, the conductor did his utmost to make the concert a success, so he made his orchestra rehearse for hours on end.

As the day of the court concert drew near, he got more and more irritable. When the players made mistakes, he would stop them, lay his baton on his music stand and swear at those who didn’t play well. Sometimes he struck the violinists with his baton, hoping that this way they would be more careful and try harder at not making any mistakes.

But the climax was the moment when he felled one of the cellists to the ground with a blow of his fist, because the unfortunate man had missed the beat.

The musicians could not put up with his behaviour any longer, so they decided to avenge the insult. The evening before the concert, one of the violinists went to see his friend, called George, who asked him: “Are you getting nervous about the concert tomorrow?”, adding that he would love to see it, but since it was the royal palace where they were going to play he couldn’t. “Oh, but you can attend the concert!” answered the musician. “I’ve got rheumatism in my shoulder, so I can’t play tomorrow, so you can go as my substitute.”

George replied to this: “But you know very well that I cannot play the violin.” “Never mind!”, continued the violinist, “Take my violin, and sit in an empty place. Sit down and set the music on the music stand. Follow the movements of the other violinists, but do not touch the strings and the conductor will not even notice you’re there.”

The following evening, the young man did as he was told. Nobody asked him any questions and he sat down in an empty place. After a while, the Queen entered her box and when she sat down the conductor gave the sign to his orchestra to begin.

Every man held his instrument in the position and they all stared at each other and the conductor, but not a sound was heard because they were all… substitutes.

Find the words in the text that mean:

1. replacement
2. be present at
3. imperial
4. it doesn’t matter
5. knock someone down
6. the way you act
7. stick
8. someone in charge of the orchestra
9. spot, see
10. use bad language
11. poor
12. signal, mark
13. go on, keep on, carry on
14. look intensely
15. at risk, in danger
16. best, maximum

Finish the sentences with the following words:
TAKE PLACE BEHAVIOUR UTMOST REHEARSE INSULT AT STAKE ATTEND CLIMAX
1. She complained of her boss’s inappropriate ________________ towards her.
2. Only 12 people ________________ the meeting.
3. They have to win the contract - thousands of jobs are ________________.
4. When they told him someone wanted to see him fired, John treated the matter with the ________________ seriousness.
5. It’s not wise to ________________ your boss.
6. The next meeting will ________________ on Thursday.
7. The film reaches its ________________ when the main character realises the whole truth.
8. The band has been ________________ at the studio all day.
After reading the text: TRUE OR FALSE
1. The conductor was an unkind and irritable man.
2. The queen was very satisfied with the performance.
3. None of the musicians attended the concert.
4. The musicians wanted to teach the conductor a lesson.
5. The conductor was mean to the musicians because he was terrified.
6. The queen likes music very much.
7. The conductor wanted to surprise the queen by arranging the concert in her honour.

Matching activity with DRAW
1. draw a contract
2. draw a picture
3. draw a conclusion
4. draw the people to sth
5. draw the line

a) reach
b) sketch, illustrate
c) decide on a limit
d) sign
e) attract

Phrasal verbs with COME
1. When I was looking through my old photograph albums the other day, I came about/across/ by this photograph of my parents’ wedding. (find something unexpectedly)
2. How did you come at/by/on these tickets? I’ve been trying to get some for ages. (be in possession of sth.)
3. He is great at coming down with successful marketing ideas for our products. (have an idea)
4. How did that come about/across/around? I can’t understand how it happened. (happen)
5. She knew what she wanted to say, but when she started speaking, it came about/round/out wrong. (result)

Make questions for the following sentences:
1. Not a sound was heard, because they were all substitutes.
2. The musicians could not put up with his behaviour any longer.
3. She ordered him to arrange an orchestral concert which should take place on her birthday.
4. He is getting nervous about the concert tomorrow.

Linking words: DESPITE NEVERTHELESS BUT IN SPITE OF ALTHOUGH
1. They went to the beach __________________ the bad weather.
2. She found the job very tough. __________ she stayed at the company and was finally promoted.
3. __________she apologized for taking the car without my permission, I was still angry.
4. Not only did he lose the business __________ he lost his house as well.
5. He never went to university, __________ getting top marks at school.

Participles:

I heard him. He practised his violin.
I heard him practising his violin. (present participle)

1. I was waiting for him. He didn’t notice me.
2. He was reading Mary’s diary. She caught him.
3. I never wear pink. Can you imagine how I would look like? (wear)
4. He didn’t want to tell her what happened. He just pretended everything was OK.
5. He tried to open the door. He couldn’t, so he called a locksmith. (unsuccessfully)
6. “I’m not going to help you this time”, he said. He also added that I shouldn’t call him any more.
7. He looked at the old photos. It made him cry.
8. They stood so long in the rain. We didn’t want that to happen, so we invited them in.
9. I called the fire brigade, because something was burning. I could smell it.
10. They’re always behind with their work. They can’t do anything on time. I can’t even imagine it. (since)

Future Continuous or Simple:
1. She ______________________ (do) her homework after lunch, so there’s no need to ask her out.
2. I think I ______________________ (do) my homework after lunch.
3. This time tomorrow he ______________________ (lie) on a beach somewhere.
4. He ______________________ (sell) this big house one day.
5. When I see you next time you ______________________ (sit) behind bars.