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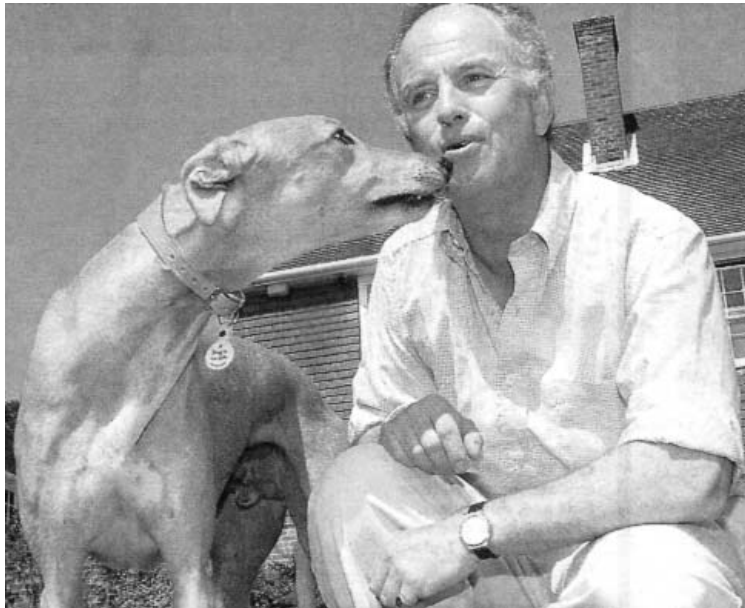
NATIONAL
QUALIFICATIONS
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TUESDAY, 1 MAY

ENGLISH
STANDARD GRADE
Foundation Level
Reading
Text

Read carefully the passage overleaf. It will help if you read it twice. When you have done so, answer the questions. Use the spaces provided in the Question/Answer booklet.

Why dumped dog is such a lucky hound



No one wanted greyhound Pal after he was abandoned for not being fast enough on the track—until an animal trainer was asked to find a dog to star in a film. DAVID WIGG tells how the renamed Celt so nearly lost out again—before finding a new home and some much-needed love.

- 1 As Celt the greyhound comes bounding over to me on green fields overlooking the picturesque fields of Kent, he obviously knows he is a dog in a million. Once abandoned, he is now the star of a heartwarming film.
- 2 Celt, with his golden fawn markings, is one of many unwanted greyhounds in Britain that are dumped if they don't come up to racing standards.
- 3 He had ended up being abandoned at a greyhound rescue centre. As the weeks went by, no one came to adopt Celt as a family pet but then something even more exciting happened to him.
- 4 Animal handler Sue Potter had been asked to find an appealing greyhound to star in the film entitled "The Mighty Celt", a touching story about a boy and his love and devotion for a dog he desperately wants to own.

- 5 Sue had the almost impossible task of choosing one greyhound from more than 100 at the kennels.
- 6 But when she saw Celt, or Pal, as he was then known, Sue immediately knew he was the one she could train for the film. So what was so special about Celt?
- 7 “His colouring was perfect, he had to be fawn with some white markings,” says Sue. “He also had to be obedient and compatible with people and other animals.
- 8 “I tested his reaction to sound and that was fine. There couldn’t be anything wrong with him—he had to be an entire dog.”
- 9 Sue trained Celt for two weeks at her home in the north of England, in preparation for his starring role. Celt then spent eight weeks filming in Northern Ireland with the cast and crew.
- 10 From all accounts, Celt excelled himself on set and everyone fell in love with him, but after the filming there was one big question remaining—what was to become of Celt? After all the attention he had received, it didn’t seem right that he should go back to being alone and unwanted once again at the kennels, but Sue felt she couldn’t keep him as she already owned five dogs.
- 11 Urgent inquiries were made among the crew and cast but it seemed no one was able to take him on from the film set where he had been thoroughly pampered.
- 12 On hearing of the young dog’s plight, Kent landowner and farmer Philip Daubeney came to the rescue. Philip is chairman of the London-based charity Dogs Trust, which cares for more than 12,500 strays each year.
- 13 He had recently lost his own pet greyhound Tocki, another rescued dog. To everyone’s relief he agreed to adopt Celt and take him to his lovely country home surrounded by 500 acres of open hills and farmland near Maidstone. Here Celt now enjoys long walks and romps with Philip’s other pets—corgis Dusty and Yehudi and five cats.
- 14 With Celt looking a picture of contentment, fully spread out in an armchair, Philip recalls: “The first I heard of him was through a vet in Northern Ireland called Rose McIlrath.
- 15 “One of her friends, Claire Millar, was working as a teacher with the children on the film. When it turned out that no real provision had been made for what was going to happen to Celt, Claire asked Rose if she had any ideas.

16 “Rose immediately thought of me because I had recently lost Tocki, who had been with me for seven years.” Philip felt there was one important question that had to be asked before he agreed to take on Celt.

17 How did the greyhound get on with cats? “I was concerned because, on the whole, greyhounds are well known for chasing small furry animals, either cats or small dogs, often mistaking them for the hare on the track. I didn’t want some terrible tragedy to happen with my five cats.

18 “I was assured that, after coming back to this country, Celt had been living with cats in a temporary home and I was assured of his character and that he would make a wonderful pet.”

19 It was then arranged for Celt to be shipped over to the Dogs Trust Kenilworth Rehoming Centre, in Warwickshire. There he was thoroughly checked over.

20 Celt was driven down in an animal ambulance from Warwickshire to his new home in Kent in July last year.

21 “He was slightly anxious but he quickly settled down. We let him out in the field to meet the other dogs. He got on immediately with them and was keener to play with them than they were with him. He fitted in very easily and quickly, and made himself at home by sitting on every chair he could.

22 “He also wanted to jump on the beds as well, but there isn’t much room to sleep if you have a greyhound on board. People think greyhounds need a lot of exercise but, actually, there’s nothing they like more than curling up in an armchair and watching television.”



23 I couldn’t help wondering if, having been pampered on set, Celt acted like a film star. The response was laughter as Philip recalls: “He was very active and bursting with energy.

24 “At first, he rushed around as if he were on a greyhound track but, otherwise, he was among the more likeable and less affected film stars.

- 25 “Most affectionate, very beautiful and a genuine, kind, loving dog, that is marvellous with children.”
- 26 Dog trainer Sue Potter adds: “I didn’t want to take Celt back to the kennels because he had had a life of luxury on the film. I asked around if anyone would like to adopt him. The young boy in the film, Tyrone, fancied having him, but his father was moving house so he said no.
- 27 “I wanted him to go to a nice home—and he couldn’t have gone to a better one. He was very lucky because he really has fallen on his feet.”

Adapted from an article by David Wigg

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