It's curtains up for new stage school!

Hayley Turnpike from Tinksbury

Mayor Joe Lavinski

Tinksbury is to have a new stage school, thanks to the generosity of talented actress Hayley Turnpike, it was announced yesterday. The stage school will be built in the Greenside area of the town, close to the industrial park.

Hayley lived the first twenty years of her life in the town, before moving to Los Angeles to pursue an acting career in Hollywood. She is best known for her starring role in the Carrie Spotter series of films. This won her an Oscar last year and has made her the UK's richest woman under 30.

The decision to build the £10 million stage school was made public yesterday during Hayley's visit to her family who still live in Lower Tinksbury. With characteristic modesty, Hayley declined to be interviewed herself, but a spokesperson for the actress confirmed that the exciting project will go ahead. Her publicity manager, Hal Brent, said that Hayley does not want a big fuss made about her involvement in this venture, adding that she had loved living in the area and wanted to give something back for future generations of young people.

An ecstatic Mayor Joe Lavinski was photographed on the steps of the town hall giving details to the press about the stage school. "We are delighted to confirm that a new stage school is to be built in Tinksbury next year. There will be full-time places for fifty 16-21 year-olds with many other acting, singing and dancing classes available. In accordance with the wishes of our generous benefactor, preference will be given to talented youngsters from our local area." It is understood – or hoped – that after the school is built, Ms Turnpike will continue to fund the school annually.

Rumours about this project have abounded for many months now; some people thought an announcement would be made last Christmas. Others felt it would never happen. Nevertheless, on this occasion, rumours have proved to be correct and there can be no doubt that the future looks bright for stage-struck youngsters who hope to follow in the famous footsteps of their heroine Hayley Turnpike.

1. Why would people read this article?

2. Headlines often play with language using devices such as puns, alliteration, rhyme, references to well-known sayings, book titles etc. What does this one do?

3. What picture(s) is / are included? Is there a caption? What does the picture add to the story?

4. Does the first paragraph answer the questions: Who? What? When? Where? (This is often called the orientation of the article as it helps to 'orientate' the reader, i.e. 'put them in the picture'.)

5. In 2 or 3 words, what is each paragraph about?

6. Does the final paragraph bring the story up to the present or look to the future? (This is often called the reorientation because it helps leave the reader with a good idea of 'what might happen now'.)

7. What do the following words mean: *pursue, characteristic modesty, confirmed, venture, ecstatic, benefactor, abounded, stage-struck, declined to be interviewed?* How can you work them out if you don't know?

8. Find some facts from the article. Often news articles contain opinion. Can you find any words in this which show the writer's opinion?

9. Who has been interviewed? (Interviews are usually with someone involved or affected / eyewitness / expert on relevant topic / spokesperson for relevant group.)

10. Are the interviews in direct or reported speech? How can you tell? (Look for use of 1st or 3rd person, present or past tense, speech marks or no speech marks, but above all whether it is the actual words spoken.) Do you prefer the direct or reported speech? Why?

11. Can you find anywhere the writer has used a semi-colon? Can you find another place where the writer might have used a semi-colon to join two closely connected sentences?

12. Is the style chatty or formal? (Find some examples of, reported or direct speech, the use of informal 'chatty' language or the use of formal, quite 'dry' language to help you decide what style the article is written in.)

13. Did you find the article a) informative and b) entertaining?