Unit 9

Unit 9 Extension

1 Read the short biography and complete the sentences with a word or phrase from the text.

   1   Hypatia was the first woman to achieve recognition as a _____ .

   2   Her father made sure she had a proper _____ .

   3   Women _____ became the head of a school of philosophy in those days.

   4   It appears that Hypatia's _____ led directly to her murder.

Hypatia of Alexandria

Hypatia was a Greek philosopher and mathematician who was born in Roman Egypt towards the end of the fourth century AD. She was the first woman in history to be recognised as a notable mathematician.

Hypatia's father was also a well-known philosopher and mathematician, so it is hardly surprising that Hypatia, who grew up in Alexandria, had a passion for learning. Her father realised she had strong natural abilities and he arranged for her to be given a good education in Athens and Italy.

Hypatia's reputation began to grow at the beginning of the fifth century, when she became head of a school of philosophy in Alexandria. This was amazing at the time, as women almost never achieved such positions, but her talents as a mathematician and philosopher ensured her success.

Perhaps it was this success that led to her murder. She was killed by an angry mob in the year 415. It was said she was murdered for religious reasons, but it is more likely that political jealousy caused her death. It is only in the past two centuries that she has taken her rightful place in history as a prominent mathematician.

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2 Read the text again. Then match the paragraphs (1–4) with the main points (a–h) they contain.

Paragraph 1 _____ - _____

Paragraph 2 _____ - _____

Paragraph 3 _____ - _____

Paragraph 4 _____ - _____

   a   Details of her education

   b   Her main achievements

   c   What happened to her at the end of her life

   d   Who she was

   e   Where she grew up

   f   The importance of her achievements

   g   What significance she has nowadays

   h   What she is known for today

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3 Collect information about someone important or famous from modern or ancient history. Complete the notes with details of the person's life and achievements.

Name: ....

When born: ....

Nationality / where they grew up:
....

What they are known for:
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Early life / education / etc:
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Main achievements:
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Later life / death:
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4 Write a short biography using your notes from Exercise 3.

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