The Life of a War Photographer

*"Looking at what others cannot bear to see is what my life has been about."*

Don McCullin

A \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Known as one of the greatest war photographers in history, Don McCullin has spent the last sixty years taking photographs of devastation and suffering in war zones all over the planet. His *prolific* output includes *haunting* photographs of the Vietnam War in the 1960s, of civil war in Cyprus, of massacres in the Congo, of famine in Sudan and Bangladesh, and, most recently, of the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Often at great personal risk, he has been to the most horrific places on earth in search of photographs that *bear witness* to the tragedy and heartbreak of war, disaster and poverty. His work will always remind people of the suffering endured by so many people during the second half of the twentieth century.

B \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

McCullin started out, not as a war photographer, but as a journalist of poverty and crime in his native country, England.

(1) \_\_\_\_\_. He shared a bed with his brother and the bedroom with his parents, and he grew up *streetwise* and tough. His childhood was good preparation for his career. Like the people he has photographed, Don experienced hunger, violence and poverty in his life. He understood what it was like to experience extreme hardship, which enabled him to really observe people´s suffering. He could look at hard reality when most people would have just looked away.

C \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Young Don´s big break as a photographer came as a direct result of his *deprived* childhood. He snapped a gang of young thugs from his neighbourhood and, soon after he took the photo, one of the gang members stabbed and killed a policeman. As a result, a national newspaper bought and published Don´s photo and offered him a contract to take more photographs. (2) \_\_\_\_\_.

D \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Don McCullin was fearless and reckless in his search for the perfect photograph. He would just walk into the houses of people who had had a death in the family, and point his camera at their faces, and he would go up to starving children or injured soldiers and snap their portraits. In many ways, he was a ´war junkie´. He found the adrenalin-rush of living in a war-zone so exciting that he felt depressed and useless whenever he was back home in peaceful England.

(3) \_\_\_\_\_. In Uganda he was captured by soldiers, imprisoned for four days and threatened with execution and, in Cambodia, a sniper shot at him just as he was lifting his camera to his face to take a photo. By pure luck, the bullet struck the camera and bounced away.

E \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Despite the risks, McCullin was *driven* throughout his career not just by his personal need to experience danger and excitement, but by a sense of moral purpose. (4) \_\_\_\_\_. In interviews, he stresses that he wants his photographs to provide evidence of what is really happening in the world. ´You have to bear witness,´ he says. ´You cannot just look away.´

F \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

In later life, McCullin has spoken about how he felt remorse for being *intrusive* during his career. (5) \_\_\_\_\_. ´Sometimes,´ McCullin said, ´it felt like I was carrying pieces of human flesh back home with me, not negatives. It´s as if you are carrying the suffering of the people you have photographed.´ In his *quest* to photograph the truth of war and struggle, he has paid a high personal price.

**FINAL TEST 2016 / 2017 READING**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1)** |  |
| **2)** |  |
| **3)** |  |
| **4)** |  |
| **5)** |  |
| **6)** |  |

**1. Read the article about the life and work of a famous war photographer.**

**Match headings 1 - 6 to paragraphs A - F:**

**1**. OPPORTUNITY **4.** GUILT

**2**. MOTIVATION **5**. BACKGROUND

**3.** LEGACY **6**. RISK

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **a)** |  |
| **b)** |  |
| **c)** |  |
| **d)** |  |
| **e)** |  |

**2. Match sentences a - e to gaps 1 - 5 in the article:**

**a)** He wanted to reveal the true face of war and famine and to tell the stories

of those who have no voice.

**b)** However, he is also haunted by the people he photographed.

**c)** In what must have been a difficult childhood, young Don was brought up

in a one-bedroom basement flat in a rough and violent part of London.

**d)** On several occasions, he was very nearly killed.

**e)** This was the start of his career as a photographer.

**3. Read the statements about Don McCullin. Match the underlined words in italics in the article to the statements:**

**1**. He was highly motivated to do what he did. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**2.** He interfered in people´s lives in an unwelcome way. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**3.** He produced an enormous number of photographs. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**4.** He was clever and quick-thinking in an urban environment. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**5.** His work is beautiful, but makes you feel sad and thoughtful. \_\_\_\_\_\_­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**6.** In his work, he observes and records the dramatic and terrible events

of the 20th century so that they won´t be forgotten. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**7**. When he was young, his family had no money and not enough food. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**8.** In his life, he went on an inner personal journey to achieve something important. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**4. Read the article again. Choose the correct answers. Circle them:**

**5. Write a summary of the article in about 50 words:**

**4. During his career, Don**

a) was wounded by a sniper.

b) narrowly avoided death more than once.

c) was wounded in Cambodia.

d) felt depressed whilst away on demanding photo shoots.

**5. According to his interviews, Don McCullin is**

a) keen to take photographs that tell the truth about

suffering

b) proud of the artistic quality of his war photography.

c) trying hard to develop his own moral sense of purpose.

d) unmoved by the images of horror he has seen.

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**1. According to the article, Don McCullin**

a) has only ever been a war photographer.

b) took most of his photographs in the 1960s and 1970s.

c) has taken photographs both at home and abroad.

d) began his career at the time of the Vietnam War.

**2. When he was a boy, Don**

a) hung out with a gang of thugs on London´s rough streets.

b) found it hard to get on with other kids in his neighbourhood.

c) was encouraged to be objective and hard-working.

d) learned to be a strong and resilient person.

**3. Don took the photo of the gang of young thugs**

a) soon after they had murdered a police officer.

b) but didn´t sell it until one of the photo´s subjects committed

a crime.

c) as part of his first assignment for a major national

newspaper.

d) in order to highlight their deprived background.