



# Finding information in paragraphs

## Reading Lesson 4: Finding information in paragraphs

### How Charles Darwin accurately predicted the existence of a moth without ever seeing it.

- A.** Charles Darwin needs no introduction. Considered as the 'father of evolution', many people who have studied life sciences have come across the works of the genius. It so happened that in 1860, he received a parcel (by post) from one of his friends who was a botanist, loved gardening, and set up many orchids in his nursery. The parcel contained a carefully preserved flower, which belonged to a certain species of plants (*Angraecum sesquipedale*) which were known to thrive mainly in the island of Madagascar.
- B.** At that time, not only was Charles seeing such a flower for the first time, but also it hadn't been seen by any other European botanist yet. What was strange about the flower was that it was 11 inches long and its nectar lay 1.5 inches deep. Nectar is typically present in flowers to serve as food for insects, who in turn help plants with pollination. But this depth was too deep for any kind of butterfly or moth known at that time
- C.** Charles firmly believed in the theory of natural selection. So when he was writing a book in 1862, he predicted that not only there should be some kind of butterfly or moth who must be helping with the pollination of such orchid flowers belonging to Madagascar, but also the proboscis of such an insect should be long enough to reach that nectar. According to Charles, if there was no way of reaching the nectar in the absence of such a proboscis, there was hardly any need for the insect to unnecessarily visit the flower.
- D.** Not only did many people who disbelieved in evolution give his prediction a cold shoulder, but also many who did believe ruled out the possibility of any butterfly or moth having a proboscis of about 30 centimetres. Several years later, two Britons set out in the jungles of Madagascar. They came across a moth whose wing span was 40.25 centimetres and the proboscis was 40 centimetres long when fully stretched. The moth would wind up its proboscis like a spring when flying and would stretch it out flat like a cylindrical tube while feeding. Today we call it the Hawk moth. Charles Darwin's prediction came true 20 years after his death.

**proboscis** = (in many insects) an elongated sucking mouthpart that is typically tubular and flexible.



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The Sample Passage has four paragraphs labelled **A – D**.

**Which paragraphs contains the following information?**

*NB. You may use any letter more than once.*

1. A reluctance to accept Darwin's claims.
2. Darwin received a package containing a flower.
3. Discovery of a moth fitting Darwin's description.
4. A peculiar aspect of the flower.



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