



Bangkok Post Learning: *Test Yourself*

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Bangkok superhumans by Gary Boyle

Read the following story by Yvonne Bohwongprasert from the *Bangkok Post*. Then, answer the questions that follow.



Photo courtesy of Andrew C. Youngson

Scottish author Andrew C. Youngson set his first sci-fi novel *The Memory Project* in Bangkok, a city he calls home-away-from-home.

Thailand has always been important to him, making it the perfect setting for his novel that reinvents Bangkok as a training base for supernaturally gifted youth.

Youngson, 38, who describes himself as a "gay man with an over-active imagination", wrote the book which is best described as a tale of horror and mystery.

In the book, Thai culture is added to grab the readers' attention as they explore the secretive world of 'Weavers'; rare humans who can experience the memories of others. Thailand was chosen as the place for training of these memory readers.

The novelist's connections with Thailand go back to when he moved to Bangkok with his family at the age of 16 in the late 90s. Since his parents continued to live in the city for a few years after his graduation, the aspiring writer came back every chance he could get to visit the country that he came to love.

"I think teenagers do a lot of very important 'growing up' between the ages of 16 to 18. That was certainly the case for me and the fact this happened for me while living in Bangkok means that the city and country have had a huge and lasting impact on me."

While Youngson has not transferred entire experiences directly into the book, what he has done is take little bits here and there and run with his imagination.

"I remember all the words and phrases I learned, I have Thai tattoos, and Thai is still my favourite cuisine. I love the vibrancy of the city and the beauty and drama of the countryside. I've been very lucky to travel a lot in Thailand both at school and as an adult. Yet, I never stop falling in love with the places and the culture.

In his book, not all of the action takes place in Bangkok.

"I've also based parts of the book outside the city too, including a special scene in Wat Chaiwatthanaram in Ayutthaya. This is a temple that I first visited on a school field trip [a barge trip up the Chao Phraya in 1999] and which I've returned to many times as it is so beautiful and quiet."

Youngson says that there are a number of ways the book's story could be told through an LGBTI lens.

"On one level, a few characters are LGBTI. For example, a central character is a gay man so an element of the book is seeing the world through his eyes and experiences as a supernaturally gifted person who just so happens to also be gay."

The Memory Project is available on amazon.com.

Section 1: Write the correct answer in the space provided.

1. What is Andrew's age and nationality?
2. What are the memory readers in his book called?
3. What do they do in Bangkok?
4. How old was Andrew when he moved to Bangkok?
5. What is his favourite kind of food?.....
6. In what year was his school trip?

Section 2: Read the following passage. Then, fill in the blanks with the correct words from the choices given.

When asked what he ...7... like readers to take away from this book, the novelist said that because Bangkok has much to offer travellers, it ...8... to be visited as a main destination -- not ...9... a transit to flying to other destinations ...10... the country.

- | | | |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 7. __A. will | __B. would | __C. could |
| 8. __A. deserve | __B. deserved | __C. deserved |
| 9. __A. just | __B. ever | __C. even |
| 10. __A. without | __B. within | __C. with |

Section 3: Find words that match the following definitions.

11. short for science fiction
12. in a way that cannot be explained by the laws of science and that seems to involve gods or magic
13. wanting to start the career or activity that is mentioned
14. the quality of being full of life and energy

For the answers, find the story online at www.bangkokpost.com/learning. If you have any questions or feedback, please contact the Editor at garyb@bangkokpost.co.th