

THE SANDMAN S EXPERIMENTS

The Sandman is **phenomenally good (1)** ______ throwing sand into the eyes of **living beings**, and he **hardly ever** misses. But a **skill** like this, of course, (2) ______ to be

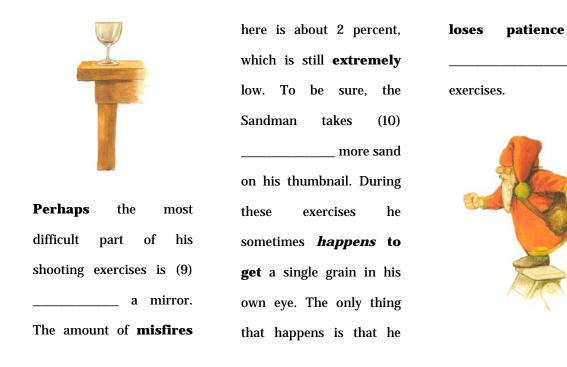
maintained by regular daily exercises. Anyone who seriously plays a sport or a musical instrument knows how important practicing (3) ______. It is the only way you can **keep up to snuff**.

The method used by the Sandman **to spread** his sleeping sand is this: he takes a handful (4) _______ sand from the leather bag **on his belt**. As he *passes* a human or an animal, he **deftly slips** a few grains of sand from the **palm** of his hand into the bend of his index finger (usually in his right hand, but if large numbers of people or animals (5) ______ **to be covered** he can use both hands at the same time), puts his thumbnail under it, and **flicks** it **in a neat arc** straight into the eye at which he is aiming.

To begin his exercises, the Sandman practices every day, throwing sand into bottles, **pots**, and jugs that sit on a **curious old cabinet** (an antique dealer (6) ______ **pay a fortune** for it!). But these are only **warm-up** exercises.

After this he exercises **blindfolded**. He has a *Silpha thoracia* beetle that **scratches the jug** with (7) ______ tiny legs so that the Sandman can tell where it is. Then he flicks sand (8) ______ into the jug.





When he has completed this (12) ______ his satisfaction, he goes on to an even more difficult test: bottles and pots slowly turning in a circle **powered by** Suzanne on a **treadmill** that **resembles** a (13) ______ jogging machine. To make the **task** even harder, the Sandman does it again, but this (14) ______ on one leg.

(11)

the

(15) ______, Suzanne doesn't like this treadmill part-but **since** she is a good little donkey, she **performs it well**. *Once in a while*, **to tease** the Sandman, she starts running very fast. Then he has to flick his sand **(16)** ______ **a frantic pace**, but he doesn't give up quickly. (17) ______ after a jar goes **spinning off and shatters** against the wall does he say: "Stop it, Suzanne! We will have **all sorts of trouble** with Roberta if you **go on** (18) ______ this."

