

Start Reading 6

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Mr. Kapax and the 'Big Rock'

1 Diamonds are many different colours. Most diamonds are yellow or brown, but the most valuable diamonds have no colour – they are called 'white' diamonds. The biggest white diamond in the world is the 'Big Rock' diamond. There is no other diamond like the 'Big Rock'. It belongs to the Princess of Kazenia, Princess Cara.

10 Two years ago Princess Cara went on holiday. She went on a trip on one of the biggest, most comfortable ships in the world, called the 'Queen Elizabeth 2' or the Q.E.2. She took all her jewels with her . . . even the famous 'Big Rock' diamond.

The ship's police checked the passports of all the passengers arriving at the ship in the harbour. One passenger was different from all the others: a tall man with black hair and a long moustache. He had a black patch over his left eye.

25 'I know that face. That man has a false moustache,' one of the young policemen said quietly. He took a photograph of the tall man and sent it by computer to the main police offices in London.

30 An hour later the telephone rang in Inspector Smith's office in London.

'Inspector?' a voice said. 'Mr. Kapax is here in England. He's on the Q.E.2. Princess Cara of Kazenia is a passenger on the ship too, and she's got the "Big Rock" diamond with her.'

40 'Kapax? Mmm. Very interesting,' said Inspector Smith. 'Thanks.' He put the phone down and sat for a minute, thinking. Then he picked up two small police radios, put them in the pocket of his coat and left his office quickly.

Two hours later he was on the Q.E.2. The big ship was getting ready to leave the harbour later that night.

Inspector Smith found the Princess's cabin. He knocked on the door and her secretary opened it. He showed the secretary his police card and the secretary took him to the Princess. They talked together for ten minutes. Then Inspector Smith left the Princess and went to the cabin next door. He switched on his little police radio and listened.

55 '... three ... four ... five ... six ... Can you hear me, Inspector? Can you hear me?' He could hear the Princess's voice clearly from the little radio. Inspector Smith smiled.



That evening, Inspector Smith was sitting in the cabin next to the Princess's cabin. His little radio was on the table next to him. He was waiting.

65 Suddenly he heard a loud 'CRACK ... CRACK' from the radio and then a frightening voice said:

70 'Don't move! And don't shout or I'll kill you! Where's the "Big Rock", Princess? Quickly! Tell me!'

The Inspector listened. Then the voice came again – it was angry now.

75 'This isn't the same as the "Big Rock"! This one is a different colour

from the real "Big Rock". It's too yellow. Why? Where have you put it, Princess? Answer me quickly!



80 The Inspector took the radio and waited quietly in the corridor outside the Princess's cabin, listening. The Princess's voice was calm.

'It isn't here, is it?' she answered. 'But you will find that the police are
85 here. They're waiting for you outside, Mr. Kapax. Your old friend, Inspector Smith, has been cleverer than you this time.'

90 The door of the Princess's cabin opened very slowly. The thin face with the black patch and the long, false moustache looked out. Inspector Smith held up the 'Big Rock' diamond between his thumb and fingers.

95 'Here's the diamond, Kapax. I've got it . . . and I've got you too now, haven't I?'

Exercises

A Answer the questions.

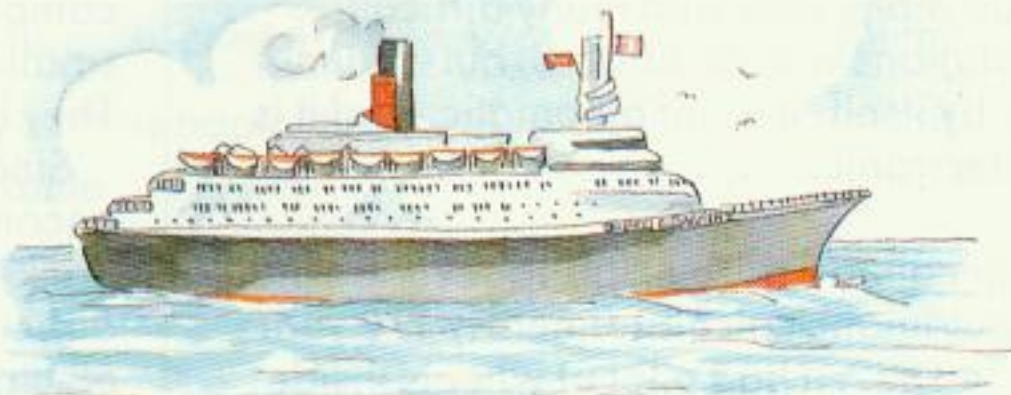
- 1 What is the name of the most valuable 'white' diamond in the world?
- 2 Who was watching the passengers arriving at the Q.E.2?
- 3 Where did Inspector Smith usually work?
- 4 Who did Inspector Smith go to see in a cabin on the Q.E.2?
- 5 How did the Inspector know when Kapax went into Princess Cara's cabin?

B Read again. Answer the questions.

- 1 (Line 8) 'It belongs to the Princess of Kazenia . . .' What is *It*?
- 2 (Line 14) 'She took all her jewels with her . . .' Who is *She*?
- 3 (Line 26) 'He took a photograph . . .' Who is *He*?
- 4 (Line 51) 'They talked together . . .' Who are *They*?
- 5 (Line 64) 'He was waiting.' Who is *He*?

C Write sentences.

- 1 valuable / jewels
- 2 comfortable / ship
- 3 false / moustache
- 4 frightening / voice
- 5 different / colour



Computers

Today we use computers in factories and offices, in schools and hospitals, and in our homes. Our computers now are small enough for us to carry, and some computers are quite cheap. More and more people can use them at work or at home.

But computers are not new. Where do they come from? What is their history? The first step towards our modern computer was the abacus. People in China have used abacuses for hundreds of years.



An abacus

An abacus is an ancient calculator. You can do many easy and many difficult calculations with an abacus, but it cannot work by itself: it is not automatic. And it is not electronic.

A man called Charles Babbage made the first automatic calculator nearly 170 years ago, in 1822. It had a lot of wheels inside

it, with numbers on them. It was automatic, but it was not electronic.



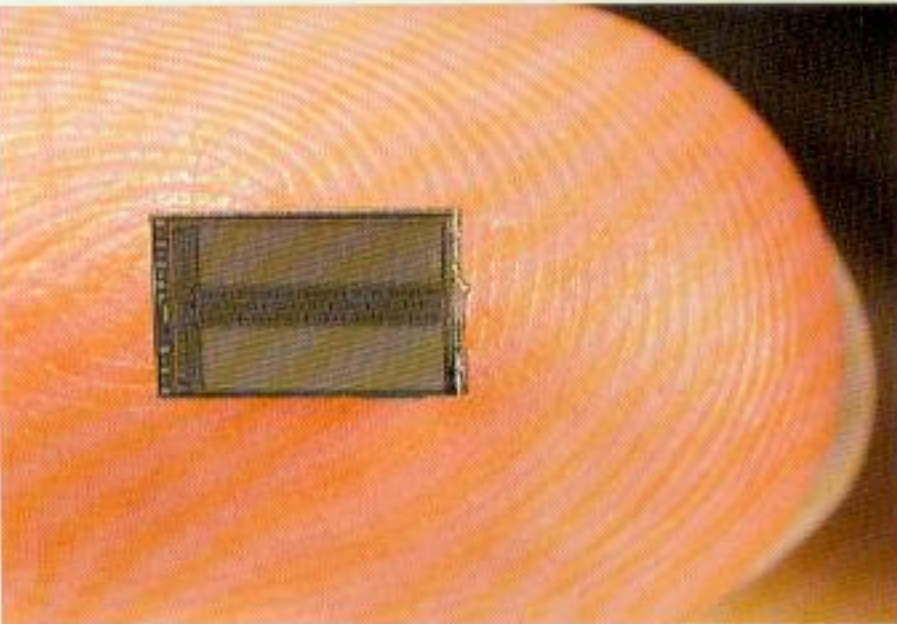
Babbage's automatic calculator

120 years later, in the 1940s, some English scientists made the first electronic computer in Europe. It was much too big to carry or move, and it used a lot of electricity.

Scientists had to find new and better ways to make the electronic parts of computers. They had to make computers small enough to carry and move easily. They had to make all the parts smaller.

Since the 1940s, computers have become smaller and smaller. Some small pocket calculators today can do more difficult calculations than this first big electronic computer! Scientists can now

make a whole computer on one small 'silicon chip'. This is a silicon chip:



Now there are silicon chips in televisions and telephones, in some cameras and cookers, and in watches and washing machines, too. Soon perhaps we will not have to carry money in our pockets. We will always be able to pay for things in shops and supermarkets with plastic cards in small computers. Perhaps we will have robots in our homes. Perhaps computers and televisions will teach us at home, and we won't have to go to school!

Exercises

A True or false?

- 1 Computers today are not very big.
- 2 An abacus is a modern, automatic computer.
- 3 English scientists made an electronic computer 120 years ago.
- 4 There are silicon chips inside today's computers.
- 5 Soon perhaps we will pay for things in shops with plastic cards.

B Read and match.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1 Today people use computers . . . | . . . the first electronic computer in Europe. |
| 2 170 years ago a man made . . . | . . . not have to carry money in our pockets. |
| 3 English scientists made . . . | . . . the first automatic calculator. |
| 4 Scientists can now make . . . | . . . at work and at home. |
| 5 Soon perhaps we will . . . | . . . a whole computer on one silicon chip. |

C Finish the sentences.

modern	cheap	easy	ancient	electronic
--------	-------	------	---------	------------

- 1 I did not have to pay a lot of money for this book. It was
- 2 This calculation is not difficult. It is quite
- 3 Cameras with silicon chips are not old. They are
- 4 Computers work with electricity. They are
- 5 The abacus is a very old calculator. It is

Dear Mr. Conman . . .

208 Oxford Road,
Windsor.

28th November.

Dear Mr. Conman,

My husband and I have just come back from Kazenia and we have immediately telephoned our lawyer, Mr. Case, in London. We were told to write and tell you about our terrible holiday in Kazenia. We booked our holiday with your company, International Contours. It was the worst holiday we have ever had. It was the most expensive one too – we paid more than £3,000 for seven very uncomfortable days in Kazenia!

On 10th July we went to your London office. We booked our plane tickets to Kazenia and our hotel there. The travel agent told us that the SILVER BEACH HOTEL was comfortable, clean and quiet. We were shown pictures of a very modern hotel with a large swimming pool and beautiful gardens, next to a long, sandy beach. We paid all the money for our holiday to the agent in your London office.

On 2nd August we flew from London airport to Kazenia. Our plane was delayed for nineteen hours at the airport in Bermuda on the way. We were very tired when we arrived in Kazenia. The travel agent told us that a Contours car would meet us at the airport there. She said that it would take us to the SILVER BEACH HOTEL. But no car was waiting and we had to take a taxi to the hotel.

The SILVER BEACH HOTEL! When we arrived, we found that it was not the same hotel as the one in the pictures in your London office. Its name was the same – the SILVER BEACH – but it was very different from the pictures: it was an old house, with no garden or swimming pool. And it was in the middle of the noisy town of Silver Beach, not near a sandy beach, but next to a busy railway station!

The woman at the hotel did not know who we were. She said that she was sorry. She did not know that we were coming. In the end we were given a small room at the back of the hotel. It had no bathroom and was next to the kitchens. We had to carry our own suitcases to the room, too.

In the room there was not enough space to hang up our clothes. We had to leave them in our suitcases, under the bed. There were electric wires coming out of the wall above the bed, and there were lots of spiders. The room was dirty and hot.

We tried to telephone the International Contours office in Kazenia, but we were told that the office was closed and that everyone was on holiday – in London! There was nothing we could do.

We have now spoken to Mr. Case, our lawyer, and we want you to give us back all our money immediately. Mr. Case is writing to you today, too.

Yours sincerely

Edna Squint (Mrs.)

Exercises

A Answer the questions.

- 1 How much did Mr. and Mrs. Squint pay for their holiday in Kazenia?
- 2 How long did they stay in Kazenia?
- 3 Who did they pay the money for their holiday to?
- 4 Why was the International Contours office in Kazenia closed?
- 5 Why were Mr. and Mrs. Squint unhappy with their hotel in Kazenia?

C Mrs. Squint uses these words in her letter. Write the opposites.

closed	open
dirty	
expensive	
modern	
noisy	
uncomfortable	
worst	

B Put the sentences in order.

- ☐ They flew from London to Kazenia.
- ☐ They tried to telephone the International Contours office in Kazenia.
- ☐ They were told to write a letter to Mr. Conman.
- ☐ When they arrived back in London, they telephoned their lawyer.
- ☒ 1 Mr. and Mrs. Squint went to the International Contours office in London.
- ☐ They found that the hotel was not the same as the one in the pictures.
- ☐ They paid for their holiday in Kazenia.



Lou-Jane's 'Belly Bombs'

Rob Cole reports from Atlanta, USA.

Here in Atlanta last week a new fast food restaurant opened in the center of the city: 'The Minor Diner'. It is a beefburger restaurant. But this burger restaurant is not the same as all the others. It is special. Why? You will never guess.

'The Minor Diner' serves special burgers – that's why. Their burgers are not like the big, thick burgers which you can buy in ordinary burger restaurants. These burgers are NEW! People are already coming from all over the city to try one . . . or two . . . or three . . . or four! They love them! They call them 'Belly Bombs'. But why are Belly Bombs so special? How are they different?

I went to talk to twenty-six-year-old owner of 'The Minor Diner', Lou-Jane Schulz. I wanted to see what a Belly Bomb is. I asked Lou-Jane why her Belly Bombs are so special. She took me to the busy kitchen of 'The Minor Diner' and showed me.

'It's really just a very small burger in a very small bun,' she said. She showed me one of the mini-burgers. 'You can easily put the whole burger in your mouth at one time.'

I did, and it was very good.

I asked Lou-Jane where she found the idea for Belly Bombs. For a few years after she left school, she worked in an ordinary burger restaurant here in Atlanta, she said. She started to wonder

why burgers are usually so big and thick. She asked some of the customers what they thought. She wanted to know what the customers wanted. Many people said they wanted smaller burgers, because they would be easier to eat at the office, in the car, on the bus or walking in the street. So Lou-Jane decided to make some very small mini-burgers – and these were the first Belly Bombs. I asked Lou-Jane how many different kinds of Belly Bomb she now has on the menu at 'The Minor Diner'.



'Seventeen,' was the answer. 'We have the regular thirty gram burger and the bigger forty gram burger. Some of our burgers have cheese and onions. You can also have a burger with beans, or a burger with tomatoes. You can have a Belly Bomb with peanut butter, or a 'Sweet Bomb' with pineapple in it. But the most popular is the regular small Belly Bomb.'

Customers were lining up in the street outside 'The Minor Diner', waiting for their Belly Bombs. People were buying packets of six or seven Belly Bombs and taking them back to the office for lunch. People were leaving the place smiling, eating happily. 'The Minor Diner' was busy. I asked Lou-Jane how many of her mini-burgers she sells every day.

'This week? We've sold three and a half tons of burgers every day since 'The Minor Diner' opened a week ago,' she said.

That's a lot of burgers! About twenty thousand every day, in fact.

And how much do Belly Bombs cost? 'Fifty cents,' she said. That's about \$10,000 every day for Lou-Jane's 'Minor Diner'.

And the Belly Bombs are becoming more and more popular. Yesterday she was asked to send 150,000 Belly Bombs by plane to London, England – an American family wanted to have a burger party with their friends! They were from Atlanta too, of course!

Exercises

A True or false?

- 1 'The Minor Diner' is an ordinary beefburger restaurant.
- 2 An ordinary beefburger is too big to put into your mouth at one time.
- 3 The young owner of 'The Minor Diner' invented Belly Bombs.
- 4 There are six or seven kinds of Belly Bomb on the restaurant's menu.
- 5 'The Minor Diner' sells thousands of their mini-burgers every day.

B Write sentences.

- 1 'The Minor Diner' / new / the centre / Atlanta
- 2 Lou-Jane / owner / 'The Minor Diner'
- 3 Belly Bombs / same as / beefburgers
- 4 seventeen / kinds / menu / 'The Minor Diner'
- 5 asked / Lou-Jane / Belly Bombs / sells / every day

C Finish the sentences. Choose a or b.

- 1 I went to see ...
 a ... what is a Belly Bomb.
 b ... what a Belly Bomb is.
- 2 I asked Lou-Jane ...
 a ... why her Belly Bombs are so special.
 b ... why are her Belly Bombs so special.
- 3 I asked her ...
 a ... where did the idea for Belly Bombs come from.
 b ... where the idea for Belly Bombs came from.
- 4 She started to wonder ...
 a ... why are burgers usually so big and thick.
 b ... why burgers are usually so big and thick.
- 5 I asked her ...
 a ... how many of her mini-burgers she sells every day.
 b ... how many of her mini-burgers does she sell every day.

Leonardo's inventions

1 Five hundred years ago a man called Leonardo da Vinci lived in Italy. He was born in 1452 and, when he was young, he lived in the beautiful city of Florence. He was the student of a painter, and Leonardo became one of the most famous painters who has ever lived.

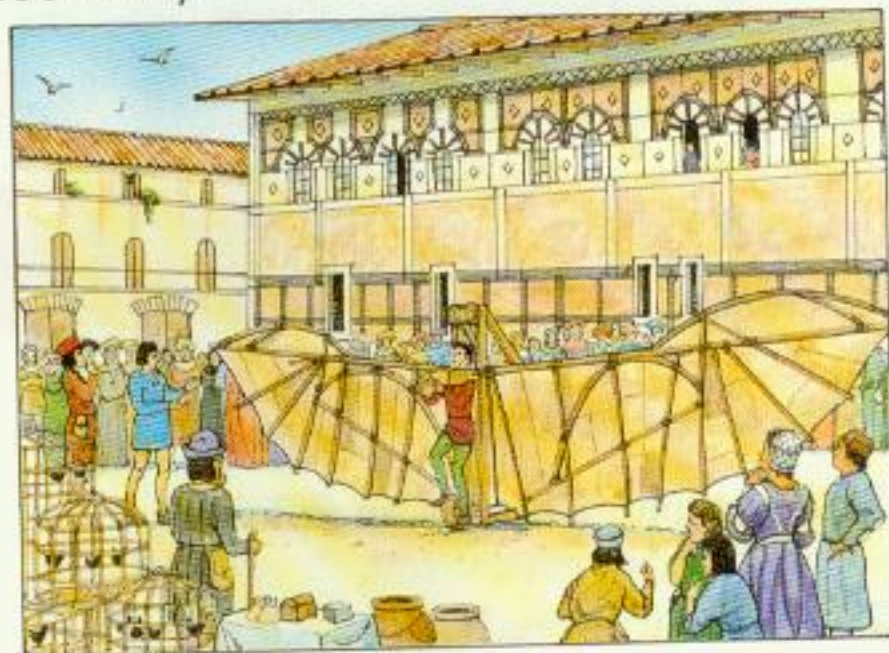
But Leonardo was also an architect, a scientist and an inventor. He invented many interesting machines, but a lot of his machines did not work very well . . .

2 One evening Leonardo was walking through the main square of Florence with two of the young students who were studying painting with him there. There was a market in one corner of the square, where people were selling birds in cages. The young men stopped and looked at the birds. Leonardo watched them flying in their cages. He started to wonder if people could learn to fly, too. He wondered if he could invent and make a flying machine. He bought some of the birds. He watched them and made drawings of their wings. Then he opened the cages and let the birds fly away. He started to build a flying machine with wings which moved up and down, like the birds' wings. It was made of wood.

3 When the flying machine was ready, he asked his young students which of them would try to fly it. Marco, the youngest and lightest student, agreed to try.

Leonardo and his students carried the flying machine out to the square one morning. A lot of people came to watch. They were very excited. They wanted to see who was going to fly the machine. They wanted to see if it would fly.

Marco climbed into the machine. He started to push the pedals with his feet, like a bicycle. The pedals went round faster and faster, the ropes turned and the wings moved up and down. The whole machine started to shake . . . but it did not fly. It was too heavy.



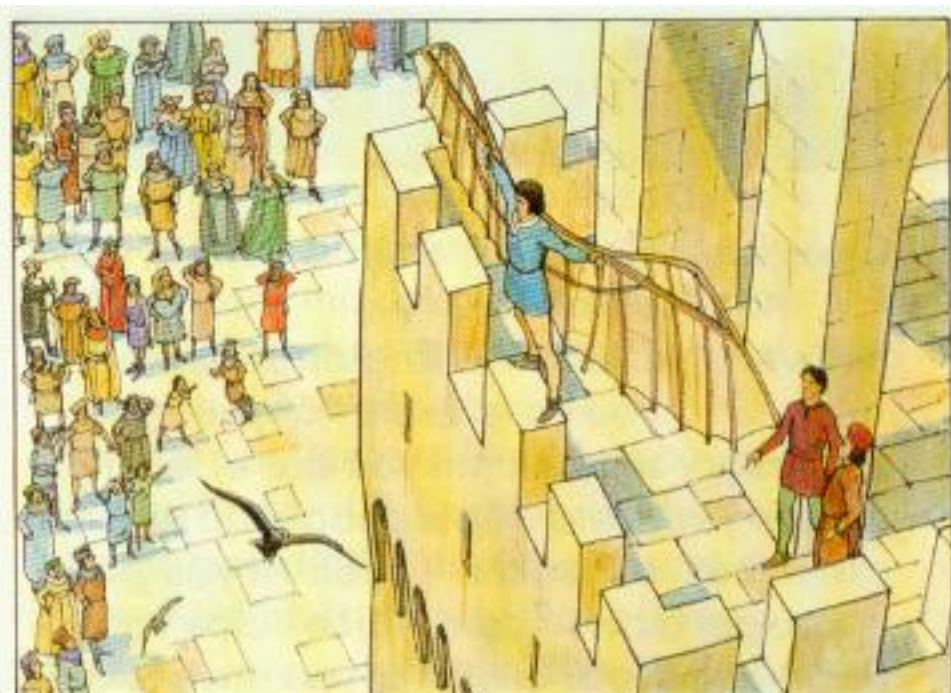
The crowd went home. They felt very disappointed.

4 But Leonardo and his students decided to try again. This time Leonardo invented a very light machine with very big wings. He wanted to find out if a lighter flying machine would fly.

Again Leonardo asked his students who would fly the new machine. Zola, who was the strongest and bravest of Leonardo's students, agreed to try to fly with the big wings.

They went to the top of a tall building in Florence and Zola put on the wings. The crowds came to watch. They stood in the square and looked up to see if the new machine would fly successfully.

Zola tied the wings onto his arms. He opened the wings and started to move them up and down. Then he jumped off the



top of the building. But he did not fly. He fell and there was a loud crash.

The people quickly ran to help him, but he was not badly hurt. Leonardo and his students did not try to make any more flying machines. He started to invent other things.

Leonardo died in 1519 and we still remember him today – for his famous and beautiful paintings, but not for his flying machines!

Exercises

A Answer the questions.

- 1 How long ago did Leonardo da Vinci live?
- 2 Why did Leonardo buy some birds at a market one evening?
- 3 Why did Leonardo's first flying machine not fly successfully?
- 4 What did Leonardo's second flying machine look like?
- 5 Why do we still remember Leonardo today?

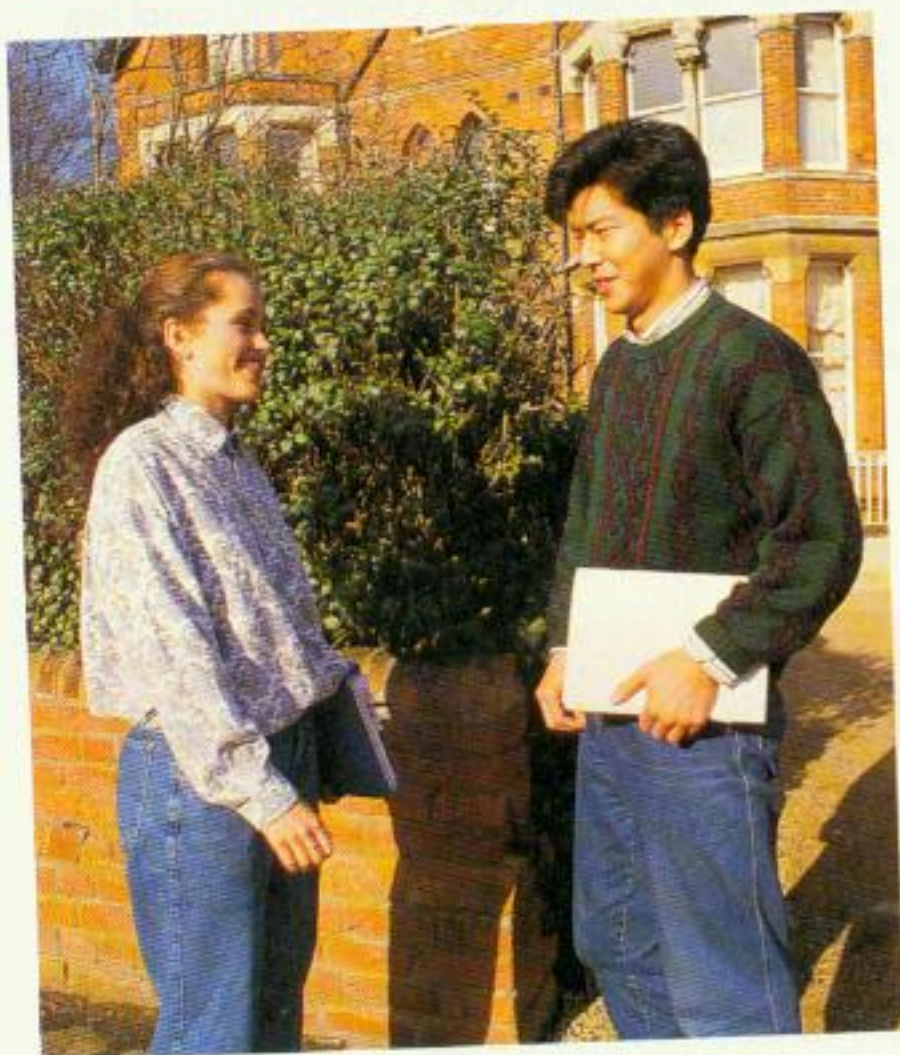
B Put the sentences in order.

- ☐ His second flying machine was a very light machine with very big wings.
- ☐ He became interested in flying machines when he saw some birds in cages in a market.
- ☒ 1 Leonardo da Vinci was a very famous painter and inventor.
- ☐ First he invented a flying machine which was like a bicycle.
- ☐ The second flying machine did not work either – it crashed.
- ☐ It was made of wood and it was too heavy to fly.

C Which of these words are for people and which are for things? Write the words in the boxes.

People		Things	
painting	building		
architect	crowd	pedal	
inventor	cage	machine	
student	painter	scientist	wing

Going to school in England



Question: When do you start going to school in England?

Answer: In England you don't have to go to school until you are five years old. But a lot of children go to special 'playschools' before they are five. At playschool you learn to draw and paint and you play interesting games, but you don't start learning to read or write or do mathematics. All children have to go to a 'junior' school after the age of five years old. At junior school you learn to read and write and you start mathematics there.

Most children stay at their junior school until they are eleven or twelve, and then they go to a 'secondary' school. In some parts of England, though, children go to a 'middle' school when they are eight and they stay there until they move to a secondary school at twelve. So in some places middle school can come between junior and secondary school.

Question: How long do you have to stay at school?

Answer: The law in England says that you have to stay at your secondary school until you are at least sixteen years old. Most people do an exam then, called the 'GCSE'. If you pass it, you get a certificate which helps you to find a good job. Or, after you have taken the GCSE, you can stay at school for two more years, if you want, until you are eighteen. In those last two years at school you usually get ready to take more difficult exams, called 'A levels', and then perhaps go to college or university.

Question: And what happens every day at school?

Answer: Most schools start at 9.00 in the morning. You have lessons from then until you stop for a twenty-minute 'break' at 11.00. In break most children go outside to play in the playground. Then a bell rings and you go back to class until lunch-time, which is usually at about 12.30. Most children eat their lunch at school, but some go home



for lunch if they live near the school. A lot of children bring sandwiches to school for their lunch, but some have a hot meal. The meals are cooked either in the school's kitchens or in a big kitchen near the school, which makes all the meals for three or four schools at the same time. The food is usually quite good.

After lunch, lessons begin again at 2.00 and they finish at 3.15 or 3.30. Then most students go home, but some stay at school for an extra hour after lessons have finished. They play football or go to one of the school clubs, like the 'Computer Club' or the 'Swimming Club'.

Question: Do you get long holidays in English schools?

Answer: In most parts of the country there are three terms (ten or twelve weeks for each term) and three holidays – in December, in April and in the summer. The longest holiday is in the summer, from the end of July to early September. It's usually about six weeks. But some schools in some parts of England are going to have four shorter terms and four shorter holidays every year. But we will still have to be at school for the same number of days every year. We won't get any more holidays!

Exercises

A True or false?

- 1 In England you have to go to school when you are five years old.
- 2 You have to stay at school for at least eleven years.
- 3 Most children do the GCSE exam when they are sixteen years old.
- 4 At most English schools there are no lessons in the afternoons.
- 5 Some schools in England now have four terms in the year.

B Choose before, until or after.

- 1 You have to stay at school you are at least sixteen years old.
- 2 Some children go to playschool they go to junior school.
- 3 You have lessons for two hours there is a break at 11.00.
- 4 Some children go to a middle school they are eleven or twelve years old.
- 5 You can stay at school you've done the GCSE, if you want.
- 6 Most children go home lessons finish at 3.15 or 3.30.

C Match the student with the school.

- 1 Denise is nine years old.
- 2 Della is seven years old.
- 3 Donna is thirteen years old.
- 4 Daisy is twenty years old.
- 5 Dawn is four years old.

- She is at a junior school.
She is at a university.
She is at a middle school.
She is at a playschool.
She is at a secondary school.

The black aeroplane

[The idea for this story comes from *The Shepherd*, a book by the English writer, Frederick Forsyth.]

The moon was coming up in the east, behind me, and the stars were shining in the clear sky above me. There wasn't a cloud in the sky. I was happy to be alone, high up above the sleeping countryside. I was flying my old Dakota aeroplane over France, back to England. It was good to think of the holiday I was going to have at home with my family.

I looked at my watch: one thirty in the morning.

'I should call Paris Control soon,' I thought.

I looked down past the nose of the aeroplane and saw the lights of a big city in front of me. I switched on the radio and said: 'Paris Control. Dakota DS 088 here. Can you hear me? I'm on my way to England. Over.'

The voice from the radio answered me immediately: 'DS 088. I can hear you. You ought to turn twelve degrees west now, DS 088. Over.'

I checked the map and the compass, switched over to my second and last fuel tank, and turned the Dakota twelve degrees west, towards England.

'I'll be in time for breakfast!' I thought. A good big English breakfast! Everything was going well – it was an easy flight.

Paris was about 150 kilometres behind me when I saw the clouds. Storm clouds. They were huge. They looked like black mountains standing in front of me across the sky. I knew I could not fly up and over

them, and I did not have enough fuel to fly around them to the north or south.

'I ought to go back to Paris,' I thought, but I wanted to get home. I wanted that breakfast.

'I'll take the risk,' I thought, and I flew the old Dakota straight into the storm.

Inside the clouds, everything was suddenly black. It was impossible to see anything outside the aeroplane. The old aeroplane jumped and twisted in the air. I looked at the compass. I couldn't believe my eyes: the compass was turning round and round and round. It was dead! It would not work! The other instruments were suddenly all dead, too. I tried the radio.

'Paris Control? Paris Control? Can you hear me?'

There was no answer. The radio was dead, too. I had no radio, no compass, and I could not see where I was. I was lost in the storm.

Then, in the black clouds quite near me, I saw another aeroplane. It had no lights on its wings, but I could see it flying next to me through the storm. I could see the pilot's face, turned towards me. I was very glad to see another person. He lifted one hand and waved.

'Follow me,' he was saying. 'Follow me.'

'He knows that I am lost,' I thought. 'He's trying to help me.'

He turned his aeroplane slowly to the north, in front of my Dakota. I was happy to follow him.

After half an hour the strange black aeroplane was still there, in front of me in the clouds. Now there was only enough fuel in the old Dakota's last tank to fly for

five or ten minutes more. I was starting to feel frightened again. But then he started to go down and I followed him down through the storm.

Suddenly I came out of the clouds and saw two long straight lines of lights in front of me. It was a runway! An airport! I was safe! I turned to look for my friend in the black aeroplane, but the sky was empty. There was nothing there. The black aeroplane was gone. I could not see it anywhere.

I landed and was not sorry to walk away from the old Dakota near the control

tower. I went in and asked a woman in the control centre where I was . . . and who the other pilot was. I wanted to say 'Thank you'.

She looked at me very strangely, and then laughed.

'Another aeroplane? Up there in this storm? No other aeroplanes were flying tonight. You were the only thing which I could see on the radar.'

So who helped me to arrive there safely without a compass or a radio, and without any more fuel in my tanks? Who was the pilot in the strange black aeroplane, flying in the storm, without lights?

Exercises

A Answer the questions.

- 1 What is a Dakota?
- 2 Why is the man flying to England?
- 3 What do people mean when they say 'Over' on a plane's radio?
- 4 How many fuel tanks do you think a Dakota has?
- 5 Why do you think the woman at the airport control centre laughed?
- 6 Who do you think the pilot in the black aeroplane was?

B Write sentences.

- 1 strange / aeroplane
- 2 clear / sky
- 3 huge / clouds
- 4 dead / instruments
- 5 empty / fuel tanks

C Finish the sentences.

happy	impossible	easy	sorry	strange
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- 1 There were no clouds in the sky, so it was to see the stars.
- 2 It was to fly over the storm clouds in my old aeroplane.
- 3 It was very to see an aeroplane with no lights on its wings.
- 4 When I came out of the storm, I was very to see an airport runway.
- 5 I was not to get out of the aeroplane and walk away from it.



The melon

1 It was a warm Friday evening – the beginning of the weekend. When *she* finished work at her office in the city, Gina drove out of town towards her house.

5 'Before I get home, I'll stop and buy a big melon. Mum and I haven't had a melon since last summer,' she thought. She knew how much her mother liked melon.

10 She saw a fruit seller beside the road and stopped her car. She bought a big green melon and put it in the back of her car, in her bag. Then she drove home.

15 When she arrived at the house, she put the melon on a large plate on the table in the kitchen. 'I'll leave *it* there until I've washed,' she thought.

20 'Hello, Mum! I'm home,' she called to her mother, who was sitting in the garden reading the newspaper. 'I've bought us a lovely big melon. When I've washed and changed, I'll bring you a piece.'

25 'Mmm. Lovely!' answered her mother.



30 She was in the bathroom, next to the kitchen, when Gina heard a loud crash! It sounded like a plate breaking. She threw down the towel and ran into the kitchen. The melon was now standing near the edge of the other side of the table and there were pieces of the broken plate all over the floor.

35 'What's happened, dear?' called her mother.

40 'It's OK, Mum. A plate has broken, that's all,' Gina answered.

She picked up the melon and put it back in the middle of the table. Then she turned round to look for two small plates and a sharp knife to cut the melon. She took the plates from the cupboard and a knife from a drawer. But when she turned round again to cut the melon, she stopped. *It* was now on the other side of the table, next to her empty bag. She could not understand why.

50 'It has moved since I turned round, I'm sure,' she thought. 'I know that I put it in the middle of the table.'

55 She went round the table and picked the melon up. She put it back in the middle of the table again and lifted the knife to cut it. But suddenly the smooth green skin of the melon seemed to move a little under her hand. She quickly dropped it and jumped back.

60 The skin of the melon slowly cracked and broke open. Something was moving inside it . . . Something was coming out! Gina stood and watched it. She couldn't move. She was very frightened.



70 A small, flat, grey nose pushed out of the melon. Then a head with black eyes like buttons came out, and then a thin mouth.

The snake's head turned and looked at Gina. Then *it* slid quietly across the table and down onto the floor.

75 Gina screamed. She ran to the door, opened it and ran out into the garden. She has never bought a melon since that day. She has never eaten a melon
80 since she saw the thin grey snake sliding towards her across the floor.



Exercises

A Put the sentences in order.

- ☐ When she was in the bathroom, she heard a loud crash.
- ☐ A thin, grey snake with small black eyes came out of the melon.
- ☐ She stopped and bought a melon from a fruit seller.
- ☒ 1 Gina left her office and drove towards her house.
- ☐ She was going to cut the melon when something inside it moved.
- ☐ She put the melon on a plate in the middle of the kitchen table.

B Read again. Answer the questions.

- 1 (Line 2) 'When *she* finished work . . .' Who is *she*?
- 2 (Line 18) 'I'll leave *it* there until I've washed . . .' What is *it*? Who is *I*?
- 3 (Line 48) '*It* was now on the other side . . .' What is *It*?
- 4 (Line 74) 'Then *it* slid quietly across the table . . .' What is *it*?

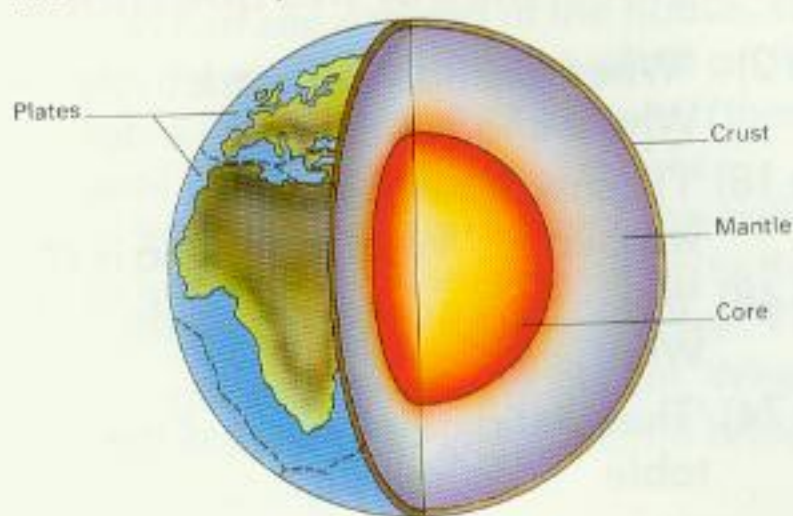
C Find words and make sets.

- 1 bathroom, kitchen , _____ , _____ .
- 2 evening, _____ , _____ , _____ .
- 3 summer, _____ , _____ , _____ .
- 4 table, _____ , _____ , _____ .



Earthquakes

1 Inside the Earth there are different layers of rock. At the centre of the Earth is the 'core'. Round the core is a thick layer of rock called the 'mantle'. The rock of the core and the mantle are very, very hot and the rock of the mantle has melted, like a warm ice-cream: it is liquid. The layer on the outside of the Earth is hard and thin. It is called the 'crust'. In some places the crust is about sixty-four kilometres thick and in other places it is only about five kilometres thick. The crust of the Earth is made of several huge pieces of rock, like the pieces of a cracked plate. These pieces of rock float on the liquid rock of the mantle layer.



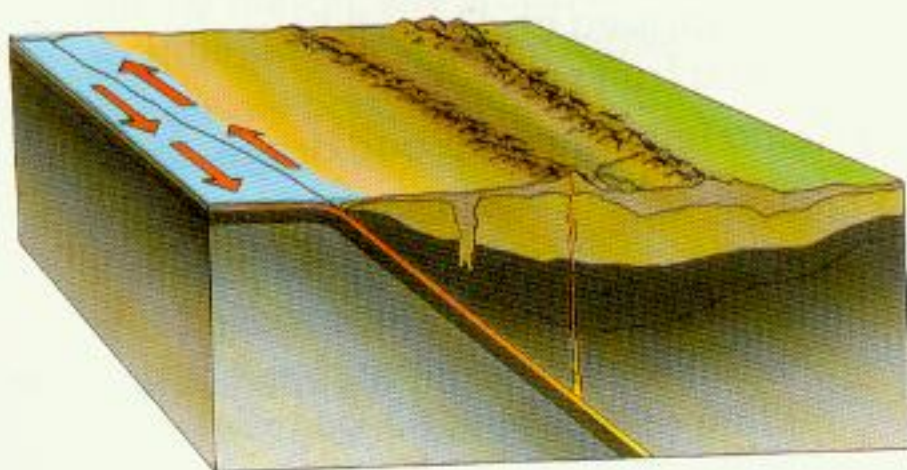
2 Scientists are now certain that the big pieces of the Earth's cracked crust are moving very slowly all the time. Every year they only move between one and nine centimetres. The pieces of the rock crust move, their edges meet (along the cracks between them), and they rub together. When they rub, the rock shakes and earthquakes happen along the cracks between the huge pieces of the Earth's crust.

3 Some earthquakes are very strong and some are weak. Sometimes we do not even know when a weak earthquake has

happened under us. We do not feel anything. But in a stronger earthquake it is not sensible to stay inside. It is better, and less dangerous, to run outside and to stay in open spaces. In earthquakes most people die because buildings fall on them. In December 1988, in Armenia in the south of the USSR, for example, there was an earthquake in three cities and 24,000 people were killed – most of them were inside buildings when the earthquake happened.

4 But is it possible to know that an earthquake is coming, before it starts? Perhaps it is.

Before an earthquake happens, the two pieces of rock along the sides of one of the big cracks in the Earth's crust start to rub together very slowly.



This is the time when it may be possible to tell where and when the earthquake is going to happen. Scientists think that animals, for example snakes and some fish, are able to hear the noises of the rocks rubbing together. Scientists think that they can feel the first shaking of the Earth's crust. And they are sure that we can learn from watching carefully what these animals do.

5 In China in 1975, for example, there was a big earthquake in the city of Haicheng. But most of the people were not in the city when it happened – they were already camping in the open countryside outside the city. The animals warned them that an earthquake was coming and they knew that it was dangerous to stay in the city. They were wise to leave: the earthquake knocked down almost the whole city!

6 Now scientists are looking for new ways to tell us if an earthquake is coming.

They are using special instruments in Japan, America and New Zealand to find out if the cracks in the Earth’s crust underneath these countries are rubbing together dangerously. They can also test the gases in the water under the ground: some gases can tell us that an earthquake is coming.

Perhaps one day it will be possible to know exactly where and when an earthquake is going to happen. Then we will be able to save many more people’s lives.

Exercises

A True or false?

- 1 The mantle is the thin, outside layer of the Earth’s rock.
- 2 The Earth’s crust is between five and sixty-four kilometres thick.
- 3 Falling buildings make earthquakes happen.
- 4 It is dangerous to stay in open spaces when an earthquake happens.
- 5 Scientists think that animals can tell us when an earthquake is coming.

B Match the sentences with the paragraphs. Write the numbers.

information	paragraph
The floating pieces of the Earth’s crust move very slowly all the time. Sometimes they rub together and this makes an earthquake happen.	<input type="checkbox"/>
It may be possible to tell where and when an earthquake is going to happen, if we watch animals and fish very carefully.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scientists are looking for new ways to warn us where and when an earthquake is going to happen.	<input type="checkbox"/>

information	paragraph
Sometimes earthquakes are weak and we do not feel them, but sometimes they are strong and kill thousands of people.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Earth is made of layers of rock. The crust is the outside layer. It has cracked into several huge ‘plates’.	1
People have sometimes watched animals, and have been able to leave their cities before an earthquake.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Poor Quentin!

Quentin opened one eye. The sun was shining brightly. His mother was up already. He could hear her singing to herself downstairs. He looked at the clock beside his bed: eight o'clock! He was late! He always had to be at his desk at half past eight, or Mr. Dagger would be angry. Quentin was always frightened of Mr. Dagger when he was angry. Mr. Dagger was Quentin's boss at the office. He had a very loud voice and, when he shouted, his face went very red.

Quentin jumped out of bed quickly.

'Hurry up now, Quentin,' he told himself.

He ran to the bathroom. He looked at himself in the mirror: he looked sleepy and he needed a shave. First he cut himself with the razor while he was shaving, and then he forgot to comb his hair. But in ten minutes he was ready.



He looked at his watch: ten past eight now. There was no time for breakfast or a cup of tea. The bus always came at exactly twelve minutes past eight. He had to hurry.

He ran down the stairs . . . and slipped! But he was lucky. He fell onto the carpet at the bottom of the stairs and did not hurt himself. He picked himself up, grabbed his bag and ran to the door.

'Bye, Mum. I'm late. See you later!' he shouted to his mother.

'But, Quentin . . .,' she called back.

He did not hear her. He was already outside, running down the street. When he reached the bus-stop on the corner of the street, he was red and hot and out of breath. He looked at his watch: it was just after twelve minutes past eight. He could not see the bus. Perhaps he had missed it?

He waited patiently for ten minutes, but no more buses came. He looked at his watch: nearly twenty-five past eight now.

'I must take a taxi,' he said to himself. 'I don't want Mr. Dagger to be angry with me again.'

He was lucky. A taxi came quite soon. He stopped it and got in.

'To the Town Hall, please,' he told the driver. Quentin worked in an office at the Town Hall.

The taxi-driver looked at Quentin rather strangely, but he did not say anything. He drove off, towards the Town Hall.

There was less traffic than usual, so they arrived at the Town Hall quite quickly. Quentin looked at his watch and ran up the front steps of the Town Hall: it was twenty to nine.

'That's not too bad,' he said to himself. 'Only ten minutes late. Mr. Dagger won't be too angry with me.'

He pushed the big front door of the Town Hall. But it did not open. He pushed again. It was locked . . . and there was nobody in the lobby . . . and the windows

were all shut. He could not hear voices, or telephones, or typewriters. The place was not as noisy as usual.

Suddenly a loud voice behind him said 'Hello, Quentin. What are you doing here?' It was Mr. Dagger.

Quentin turned.

Mr. Dagger was standing there with his three children, smiling. He was holding a big red shopping bag in one hand. He looked less tidy than usual.

'Going to the office, are you, Quentin?' Mr. Dagger started to laugh. 'But it's Saturday today, Quentin. The office is shut. There's no work today!'



'Saturday?' said Quentin. 'Oh no! Saturday!'

He went back home . . . and he went back to bed.

Exercises

A Answer the questions.

- 1 What was Quentin's mother doing downstairs when he woke up?
- 2 What did Mr. Dagger usually look like?
- 3 What did Quentin do while he was shaving?
- 4 How did Quentin go from the bus-stop to the Town Hall?
- 5 Why was the door of the Town Hall locked?

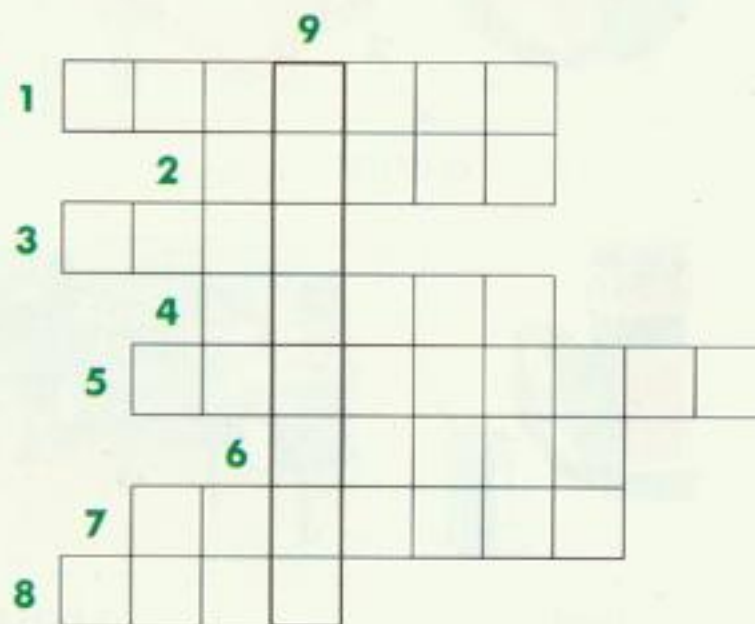
B Finish the sentences.

myself	yourself	himself	herself	himself
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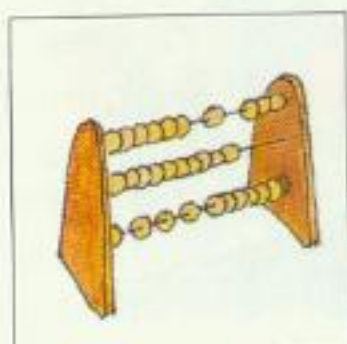
- 1 He looked at in the mirror.
- 2 She was singing to downstairs.
- 3 I told to hurry up this morning.
- 4 'I'll have to take a taxi,' he said to
- 5 Before you get up, you should ask : 'What day is it today?'

C Write the words in the squares.

- 1 Quentin looked at in the mirror.
- 2 Quentin cut himself with the
- 3 He fell onto the carpet, and did not himself.
- 4 A taxi came quite soon. He was
- 5 The taxi-driver looked at Quentin rather
- 6 The taxi off, towards the Town Hall.
- 7 There was less than usual in the streets.
- 8 Mr. Dagger looked less than usual.
- 9 The offices were closed because it was



Picture dictionary



an abacus



an architect



a bun



a bus-stop



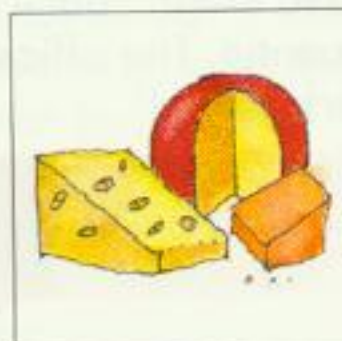
a cabin



a cage



a certificate



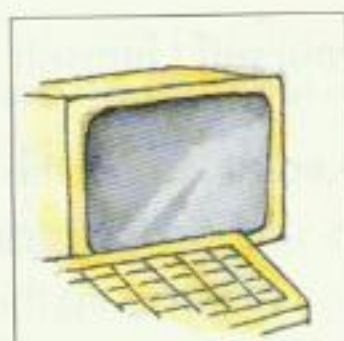
cheese



a comb



a compass



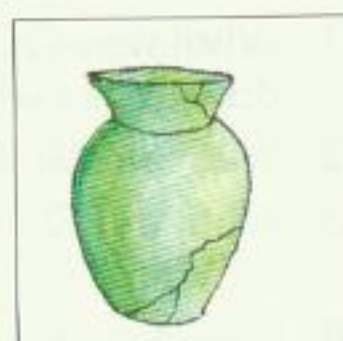
a computer



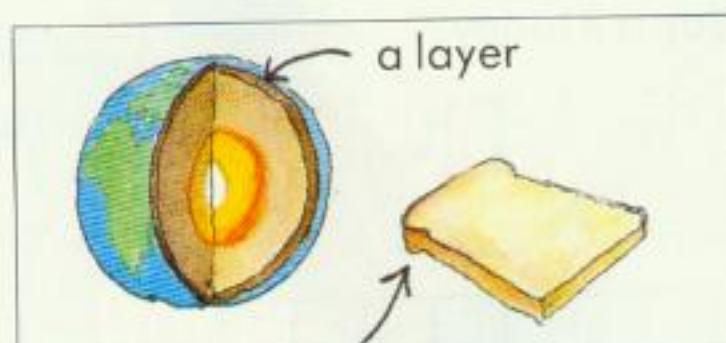
a corner



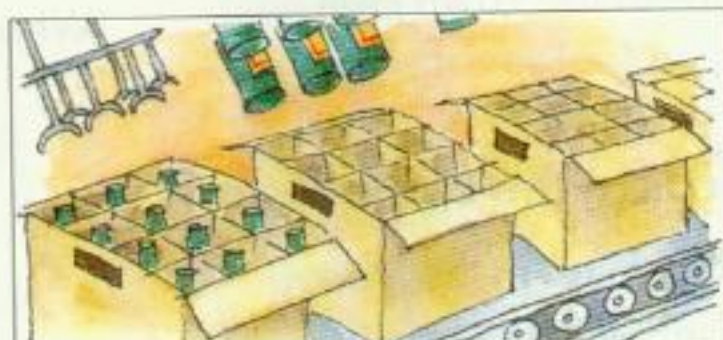
a corridor



cracked



a crust



a factory



floating



fuel



a hospital



jewels



a lawyer



a market



a melon



a menu



a mirror



a moustache



a passenger



a pedal



a pineapple



a plate



a playground



a railway station



a razor



a restaurant



same



different



a scientist



sharp



shaving



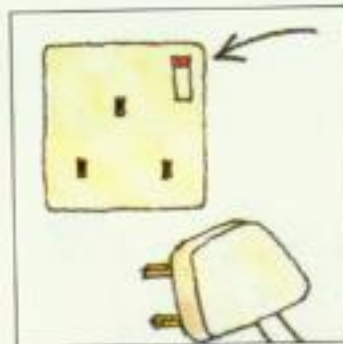
a spider



a square



a suitcase



a switch



a tomato



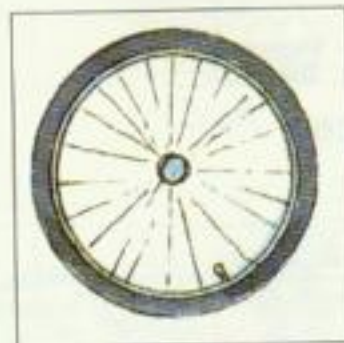
a typewriter



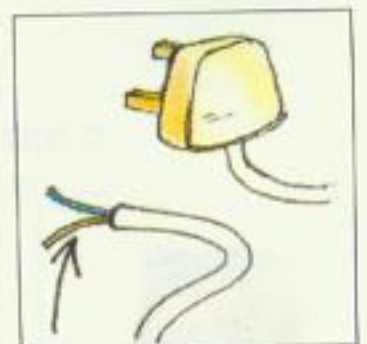
untidy



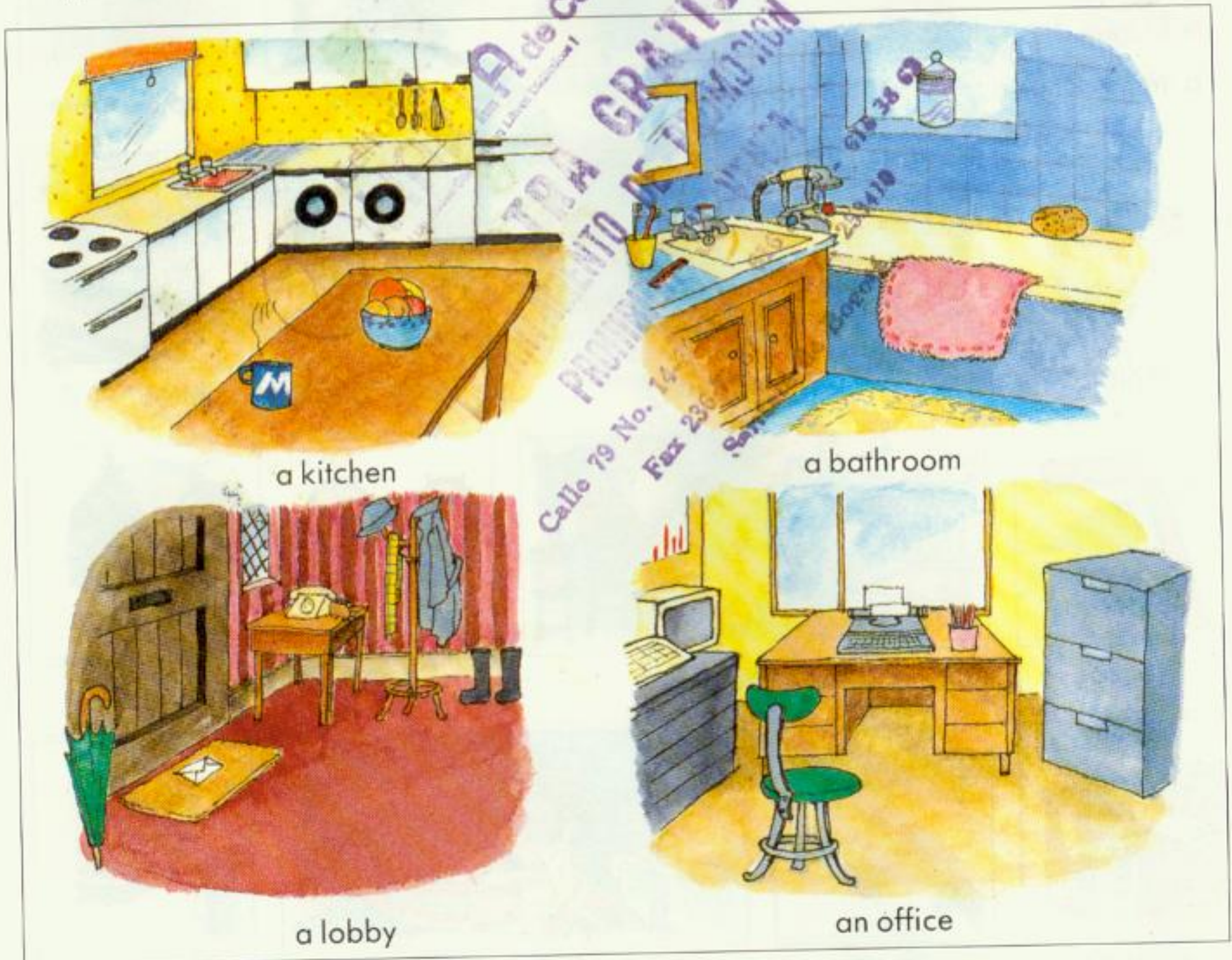
tidy



a wheel



a wire



a kitchen

a bathroom

a lobby

an office

rooms