LISTENING

Part 1

Practice task | Ex 1

L01

F: I've just started using rap music in class. I saw a video online showing how it's being used and thought I'd give it a go.

M: That's very brave.

F: My students thought it was a joke at first – the song was called 'April Fools' Day' after all, but they're generally far more up for new methods of learning than teachers, in my experience. So, there was little chance they'd find it a waste of time. It's too early to tell whether it's as good as other ways of developing their understanding, but I want to avoid a mistake I always make, which is to include a new technique I've learnt in every class. The novelty soon wears off and students get as fed up with it as the old ones.

M: I had a class discussion about rap a few weeks ago. What took me aback was the passion it generated throughout the group. I half expected it not to work as a whole-class activity, as I thought the minority who have no interest in it would withdraw from the debate. They had just as much to say as its greatest advocates, though, which suggests it's a powerful vehicle for getting across the things we want to teach.

Strategies and skills: Understanding attitude and opinion | Ex 1

L02

1 The glossy leaflet describing how great it would be was some distance from the reality, I'm afraid. I was seriously hoping that a course with as many sessions as this one would be able to explore the issue in the kind of detail I enjoy. However, the opposite was the case.

2 In my day, school seemed to reward those who were good at academic theory and didn't address the needs of those who were good at practical applications. I was in the latter group, of course, and although I suppose some staff tried to make the lessons as interesting as they could, I still left with very little to show for it, despite many years of consistent effort.

3 In some ways, the majority of modern movies are extremely clever. They contain both visual and verbal in-jokes that appeal in different ways to different age groups. What's turned me away from going to the cinema so often, though, is that the idea of 'good guy is threatened by a powerful bad guy but eventually wins' has become almost universal. I just really crave something that doesn't use that same tired formula.

Strategies and skills: Understanding attitude and opinion | Ex 2

L03

1 There was an introductory offer that seemed too good to be true, as they always do, but at least they did tell you what the membership fee would go up to after the initial three months, to avoid any nasty shocks. Some of the machines look as though they've been taken from a futuristic science-fiction film. I initially thought I'd never be able to get my head around how to use them, especially as places like that often employ too few staff to help you out, to save money, I suppose. That's not the case there though so it's been remarkably easy to pick up what to do – you can't keep me off them now.

2 She's proving to be very popular overall, apart from her tendency to arrange two meetings in different places at the same time. She's generally forgiven for that because of how she systematically involves everyone under her in the decision-making process. I think she's actually grateful for their input, given that most of her professional background's been spent in hospitality rather than marketing.

3 I'd like to think that travel companies are getting on the ecotourism bandwagon for altruistic reasons, but I really don't believe that to be the case. I doubt that ecotourism is any more lucrative than traditional travel. But perhaps when large numbers of consumers see the company's name attached to something that's supposedly beneficial for the planet, it'll make them think more kindly of a business whose income comes largely from environmentally harmful activities.

Strategies and skills: Identifying feeling | Ex 4

L04

1 I know that Jeremy has his faults and that some of his nervous tics and habits drive you mad at times. But I think you should bear in mind his compassion and generosity, rather than solely focussing on rather insignificant behaviours.

2 Sorry to interrupt, and I appreciate that this issue is taking up an enormous amount of your energy at the moment, but much of what you're talking about is of no direct relevance to us and there are fifteen other items on the agenda which we really need to discuss.

3 Any disagreements I had with the theatre director have long since been resolved – I see absolutely no point in holding onto resentments, as this is the best way that I know of losing any sense of inner peace, which I prize above all else these days.

4 The food at the restaurant tasted amazing, but a day later, I was more ill than I've ever been before. I just wanted the stomach pains to stop – it was absolute agony. Once I'd recovered, I contacted the restaurant manager who seemed to suggest that I was lying. He eventually offered me a voucher for a free meal, but why would I want to eat there again?

5 Ever since Martha contacted me about the possible opening within her company, I've hardly been able to sleep. My family have really had enough of me going on and on about how fantastic it would be if it comes off. I honestly can't think of a more perfect opportunity.

6 What unsettles me about Alex is that every time we speak, he makes a real point of saying how amazing he thinks my work is. Don't get me wrong – it's nice to get a bit of praise now and then, but only if it's truly genuine. I can't help wondering what the real reason is behind it.

7 As soon as I've got it clear in my mind that applying to study medicine at university is what I really should be doing, this voice in my head unhelpfully suggests that it'd actually be better to do veterinary science. So then I manage to convince myself that aiming to become a vet's the right course of action. I then repeat the whole process so I end up back where I started!

8 What they're aiming to get from the negotiations with the managers is exactly what we want and need. I can't ever remember a time, though, when we got anywhere near what we were asking for, and I've got no reason to believe things will be different this time round.

EXAM TASK

L05

Extract 1

You hear a scientist being interviewed about plastic pollution.

F: How serious is plastic pollution?

M: Plastic was and, to some extent, still is seen as a cheap and simple resource to cater for people's needs. However, no one seriously considered what we'd do with it when we needed to throw it away. It takes hundreds of years to biodegrade, so now it's everywhere, and largely in a form that's too microscopic for us to see. We have no idea of the long-term effects on the organisms, including humans, that ingest it. It's no longer a case of how we fix the issue – it's too late for that. The imperative must be to stem the flow of plastic into the environment to minimise the biological cost.

F: Do you think people are responding to the dangers of plastic pollution?

M: A positive public response has already been forthcoming, but my concern is that it's aimed at only the least serious part of the problem. Everyone sees pictures of oceans full of plastic bags and bottles on the news and assumes that this is the biggest issue. While something undoubtedly needs doing about this, it ignores the fact that creatures all the way up the food chain are already eating the plastic micro-fibres from our clothing and the tiny flakes from 50-year-old discarded plastic items, and the results of this could be devastating.

Extract 2

You hear two friends talking about a place where they spent a lot of time as children.

M: So, have you ever thought of going back to Standon?

F: What, where we grew up? A lot, yes, but I've never been able to bring myself to do it. I can't imagine for a second that many, if any, of our old neighbours are still there so I sometimes wonder why I'd bother.

M: Oh?

F: Well, a friend of mine said it's always a mistake to go back somewhere you've really enjoyed being. Not only is it never actually the same as how you recall it, the fact that the reality is so different actually diminishes the affection you remember it with. That, more than anything, is what's stopped me from going.

M: I think I'd have such high expectations going back there that there's no way they could ever be met, so I can really see where your friend's coming from. In some ways, it's not actually the place that you want to visit again, it's the time that you spent there and the things that you did and who you did them with, which you can never recapture anyway. So it's a nice idea, but perhaps one that's never actually ticked off on the 'things I'd like to do' list.

Extract 3

You hear two scientists talking about food hygiene in restaurants.

F: I worry that the system for ensuring food hygiene standards isn't working as well as it could. Many businesses that cause problems only get a caution and a small fine.

M: Even if people end up with food poisoning. The crazy thing is, there's often nothing else judges can do, especially if it's a first offence.

F: And it's not that restaurants aren't being caught when things like this happen but there's always some legal loophole that allows them to get away with it. The proprietors just don't care about keeping their places clean.

M: I think it's ignorance more than a bad attitude myself. They're usually businessmen, not chefs.

F: I guess.

M: Speaking of rules and regulations, how's your government advisory role going?

F: It's certainly been an eye-opener! From the beginning, I've been extremely keen to tell them about all the changes that need to be made in terms of government policy. It's as though I'm speaking another language, as all I get back is a wall of silence, which is really unhelpful. Perhaps it's because I'm a little too forceful in commenting on the deficiencies of the current approach, but that's what they pay me for, after all.

LISTENING

Part 2

Practice task | Ex 1 and Ex 3

L06 and L07

Darren: Good morning, everyone. Today I'm going to be talking to you about research I've been doing on my geology course into the metal we often associate with winners … gold! So why is gold used as the medal for winners? Well, because it's so precious, of course. In comparison, silver - the metal usually associated with second place - is approximately 19 times more abundant than gold!

We get most of the metals we use in day-to-day life from the ground, often by digging deep underground in a mine to retrieve them. Gold's no exception in this regard, but what sets it apart is the pure form it's in when taken from the ground. Metals such as iron and aluminum are mixed with other minerals which they then have to be separated from.

The earliest evidence we have of humans exploiting gold comes from caves used as dwellings around 40,000 years ago. It would take many more thousands of years before people started working gold into jewellery, and even more for coins to be created from it. But the flakes found on the floor there are the first sign that people valued and worked with this precious metal.

Gold's found in small quantities all around the world, but is present in larger amounts in some countries. I'd never associated China with being a great source of the metal, and assumed that somewhere like the United States was the main producer. It does, however, currently come top of the list, with Australia in the silver medal position behind it, Russia taking the bronze and the USA in fourth place.

A huge majority of the gold found today is used to make what you and I might wear on our fingers or around our necks: jewellery. In the United States, for example, this industry accounts for an amazing 38 percent of the gold produced. The quantity that the electronics sector consumes took me aback, however, as it's not actually far behind at 34 percent. The amount used in dentistry and in the building industry is tiny compared to these two.

Strategies and skills: Identifying cues | Ex 3

L08

Leila: Hi, everyone! I'm here today to tell you all about a fascinating species I'm involved in researching: the golden tree frog.

The project I'm part of is based on the Caribbean island of Trinidad. Whilst a substantial amount of useful data has been generated there in recent years regarding the golden tree frog's diet, little has been gathered on their reproduction, so we were there to try and provide that.

The species is endemic to Trinidad, meaning it's where it's originally from. Unfortunately, due to many different factors such as the introduction of invasive species from other regions and habitat loss, very few golden tree frogs now remain in the island's forests. In fact, their distribution is now limited to a couple of the highest mountains on the island, El Tucuche and El Cerro del Aripo.

This has led to them being reclassified on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's Red List, the most widely accepted scale of how healthy the populations of different species are. Having been re-categorised from vulnerable to endangered in the past, the golden tree frog has recently been designated as critically endangered – the highest category on the scale.

Losing them in the wild would be a disaster as they're such a beautiful species in so many respects. Their subtle colouration cleverly changes with the frog's temperature. And the elegant way in which they glide through the air from tree to tree is a big contrast to how clumsy they look when crawling around on the leaves and branches of their treetop home.

Strategies and skills: Understanding specific information and stated opinion | Ex 5

L09

While I was pretty content for quite a while living in the house I was in prior to buying the houseboat, I began to feel restless. It was as though I always thought I should be somewhere else, and was quite the opposite of how well-balanced I am now I'm actually living on the water. I was terribly excited once I'd had the idea, but then got really worried about finding the perfect houseboat!

Strategies and skills: Understanding specific information and stated opinion | Ex 6

L10

It takes a certain kind of person to take on long solo voyages. Most experienced sailors would identify discipline as an essential. My own take on that is that anyone can learn this, especially if your life depends on it. The same is true for the strength, both of character and physically, that you'll need. Without natural optimism, though, I wouldn't even bother trying it. Things will go wrong, and if your natural tendency is to think negatively about it, you won't last long!

Strategies and skills: Understanding specific information and stated opinion | Ex 7

L11

The concert was organised almost exclusively by volunteers. In fact, with the exception of the guy who filmed everyone on stage, no one received a penny, not even for travel costs. That's saying something as the woman who booked all the groups and singers came all the way from New Zealand. There was a fantastic person who introduced all the musicians before they came on stage – she was so good, everyone thought she should've been a professional presenter!

Strategies and skills: Understanding specific information and stated opinion | Ex 8

L12

All the plants and animals in the region are almost totally dependent on a certain amount of rain falling each spring. Rainfall has always been remarkably reliable throughout the area, meaning they have never needed to seek alternative sources further afield. The drastically reduced quantities that have been falling in recent times, therefore, have proved utterly devastating.

Strategies and skills: Identifying and eliminating distractors | Ex 10

L13

I've been a professional TV weatherman for about eight years now. The novelty of being recognised wore off quite a while ago, so it's actually the variety that still gets me to work every day with a smile on my face. I present from a whole range of places, not just the studio, you see. Studying weather patterns, of course, is always fascinating. I've been doing that for so long now, though, that there isn't much I haven't seen before.

Strategies and skills: Identifying and eliminating distractors | Ex 11

L14

The problem with my job is that you can never appear on screen looking as though you've arrived at work in a rush – you have to look your best every day. This of course means shaving, which I have to say I would gladly never do again if I didn't have to. I've come to terms with arriving early, as that's quite often necessary. Using make-up was outside of my comfort zone to begin with – it's all just part of the working day now, though.

I do quite a lot of forecasts outside the studio. My producers try their best to ensure I occasionally do it somewhere out of the ordinary. Perhaps the oddest of these was the day they decided we should do it in a zoo. It caused a bit of an argument when they wondered whether I'd like to describe the weather while standing next to a group of giraffes. Thankfully, I won that particular battle, and the penguins waddling around my feet as I spoke to the camera got some great comments from viewers.

Many TV weather presenters have a background in journalism, so know little about the subject matter when they start. However, I studied meteorology (or weather) at university, so was already an expert but had never done any broadcasting work before. I was sent on an acting course soon after I got the role, which has helped immensely. Learning about film editing's something I've also been intending to request for a while, just in case I ever get fed up with appearing in front of the camera.

EXAM TASK

L15

Angkor Mapping Project

Good morning, everyone, my name's Laura Holden. Welcome to my talk about a research project I'm involved with in Cambodia that's mapping the whereabouts of the different parts of the ancient city of Angkor, which has now largely disappeared.

First, let me tell you about how I came to be an archaeologist. Archaeology was seen as a rather boring profession by most people my age, despite some excellent TV documentaries that brought various periods of ancient history back to life. I was already into the subject by the time I saw them, though, thanks to a fascination with the pyramids that dated back to when I was about six and ended up with me studying archaeology at university.

I wasn't sure what to do after completing my degree. I wasn't setting my sights very high and was sure I'd end up working as a museum curator, as many archaeology graduates do. That was until a guy I'd been close to on my course, who'd just got a job as a lecturer at one of the top universities, said I should broaden my horizons, as he had done. I took his advice, and the post for the Angkor project was the first one I saw advertised, so I applied for it immediately.

The project involves taking aerial pictures over where Angkor was believed to be, so a map of it can be created. This means getting our equipment high up over the site. Helicopters provide really precise height and speed when compared to satellites or conventional aeroplanes, so they are ideal. Drones would also have enabled us to do this had the equipment not been too bulky to fit into them.

There are lots of ways of mapping ancient sites. A really interesting method uses cameras which see infrared light rather than light that's visible to us. Ours was the first to use lasers, 16 of them actually, all firing beams of light at each square metre of the area.

A lot of time and resources had already been poured into the project long before we were ready to start our mapping. I knew it had been money well spent the moment a clear impression of a canal appeared on the screen. This was closely followed by an ancient reservoir that had been hidden beneath the jungle for hundreds of years, which was just as amazing.

Everyone involved in the mapping was there for a particular reason. One task was to produce pictures of what life might be like in each part of Angkor using the images we'd taken. I'm not much of an artist but my IT training made me the perfect person to generate 3-D models of them on the computer.

A key finding of the research was the size of Angkor, which took everyone by surprise. No one thought that cities which had roughly the same dimensions as a modern American city existed in the 12th century. It wasn't as big as a giant metropolis like Tokyo, of course, but you have to remember that the world's population was sixteen times smaller back then.

No one knows for sure why Angkor fell into ruin. One theory is that invasion by neighbouring states and a subsequent long war were to blame for it being abandoned. Climate change is the hypothesis that I've actually seen the most convincing evidence for, although many researchers hold disease responsible for its sudden decline.

Does anyone have any questions?

LISTENING

Part 3

Practice task | Ex 1

L16

Interviewer: On the show today, we have Harriet Brown and Andrew Miller, both of whom have fairly recently set up their own estate agencies. Harriet, how difficult was it to decide to go it alone?

Harriet: Well, I've always felt that the idea of 'home' and having a safe space to relax and unwind, is such an important concept. I guess that's why I got into the profession. I'd already gained lots of experience in selling houses before I even thought about going it alone. Had there been tension with my boss, the decision would have been made for me, of course, but we got on pretty well. Even so, in the few weeks after I'd decided, there was no way I could pick her or my other colleagues' brains for tips on how best to do it – I didn't want anyone there to know what I was planning. Then a few days after I'd received a big bonus at work, some suitable premises became available in the town I'd just moved to, so I thought 'it's now or never!' I was expecting to have to wait ages for everything to fall into place, but I was up and running before I knew it.

Interviewer: Andrew, how did you go about finding somewhere to base your business?

Andrew: I'd already agreed a loan with the bank at a pretty favourable rate, which opened up a much wider range of potential premises. I'm a bit of a perfectionist, so I set about finding somewhere that met absolutely all of my criteria. This didn't exist, of course, and I was faced with this long list of other options, none of which seemed totally suitable. I eventually picked one almost at random, as I was so fed up with trying to decide. There was another similar business just down the road from it. Rather than worrying about whether two could succeed in the same street, I thought 'business is business' and went for it anyway.

Interviewer: What were the initial periods of running your own business like for you both?

Harriet: My expectations were that it'd be a really thrilling time. After all, what could be more exhilarating than running my own estate agency! The reality was somewhat different, though. I was spending as much time as I could at the office, and although the days seemed to fly by I wouldn't be able to tell you now even a fraction of what I did.

Andrew: My lasting impression of that time is of finishing one thing and immediately moving onto the next, without time for serious reflection or to catch my breath, and my memory of it all is a little hazy. I have a young son, so I'd made a promise to myself, and to him, that I'd avoid the trap that many new business owners fall into of being at work all day every day to begin with. I kept my promise, but the first few months seemed to last for years!

Strategies and skills: Identifying agreement and disagreement | Ex 3

L17

1

M: There needs to be a total re-think on transport in the city, and I mean total! As it stands, the car is king, and there's no culture of looking out for cyclists, which frightens people who would otherwise ride to and from work.

Nonetheless, some cities have managed to transform this almost overnight.

F: Drivers' lack of concern for bike riders is certainly what's kept me and a lot of others off our bikes, but I think you're being incredibly optimistic about how quick it would be to solve the problem.

2

F: I think we've reached the upper limit of how much medical research we can actually afford – I mean, there aren't endless reserves of money available. We'd make significant progress if these resources were targeted much more carefully.

M: The processes for choosing who's entitled to receive financial support are already time-consuming and rigorous enough. We're definitely up to the maximum of the share of budgets that medical research should receive, though.

3

F: The study showed that when upbeat, rousing classical or pop music was played in the factory, output actually rose, whereas the reverse was true for calmer or more sombre music. Interestingly, workers reported feeling more lively and content whatever the music was. That's surely true.

M: It was such a small-scale short-term study that I wouldn't read much into it, certainly when it comes to efficiency on the production line. Having something to break the repetitive nature of that kind of work is bound to lift your spirits, though, even if you don't really like what's being played.

Strategies and skills: Identifying agreement and disagreement | Ex 4

L18

1

M: I've a theory that people strongly believe it's every citizen's job to fund charities, not the state's, and some even resent it that public money is used on charities rather than hospitals and the like. So increased state help actually leads to the general public becoming less willing to donate money. Cutting state handouts also forces charities to improve the way they're run, so they really make the most of every public donation.

F: I can't say I've ever heard of anyone complaining about the state's level of support for charities, but I can see that it has a direct influence on public donations. I certainly think that being less able to rely on state handouts is a good way of getting charities to think carefully about what they spend every penny on, though.

2

F: The current system of providing students from less well-off families with free food at lunchtimes appears to be working well. What I'd also like to see, now that both schools and the state have actually done something positive about parents' concerns regarding how healthy school meals are, is controlling the amount that students are given.

M: I feel that both education and food are basic human rights. Given that the former is free for everybody in this country, then we should also provide the latter without charge during the school day. It's heartening to see that schools have taken on board advice about providing a balanced lunchtime diet for students, and I think limiting the quantity of food per student could help in the battle to improve students' health.

3

M: Given the amount of money we spent on the course, I'd have expected it to be held somewhere with rather better facilities. That said, the guy who led the course couldn't have done more for the participants. We all had so many questions because everything we covered was so relevant to our needs.

F: If I'd written a list of all the things I wanted to focus on beforehand, I would have been able to tick all of them off, and it was as though he could read our minds as he seemed to know exactly how to handle each of our needs. The amenities at the venue are probably more basic than you're used to, but there was everything there that I could have asked for, and more.

4

F: What would you say is the most important development of the last fifty years?

M: Oh, the internet, of course.

F: Really?

M: Yeah – I mean, what other invention has had such a wide sphere of influence? It's revolutionised education for starters, and I'm talking about education in its broadest sense. You can now find out pretty much anything you want in a matter of seconds, which also has a negative indirect impact. Everyone now expects instant solutions to things which there's simply no quick fix for. I'm not so enthusiastic about what it's done to our ability to interact with each other face to face, either.

F: I think it's hard to argue with your last point, judging by the declining levels of politeness we're seeing everywhere. I'd go along with what you said about the internet's importance as a learning resource too. I don't think people's expectations of the time it takes to sort out important issues have really altered at all, though – they just have a public platform now to moan about how slow it is!

Strategies and skills: Understanding feeling | Ex 5

L19

1 At first sight, the opinions presented in the book seem thoroughly convincing. On closer inspection, however, particularly of the data that were used to support the author's arguments, doubts started to creep in about how plausible they actually are.

2 There are, of course, many who are against homeschooling. I wholly go along with their criticisms of the few parents who are found wanting as educators and who are unwilling to do any training. I do, however, object to them using isolated instances of this to give the impression that this is a widespread problem, thereby painting the whole concept of homeschooling in a negative light. Even they must acknowledge that the majority of homeschooled students do just as well as their school-taught peers.

3 Greg McPherson's latest movie *The Yellow Tree* stars Angela Gill as a scientist who's researching the ocean depths for new life forms, a role that's strikingly similar to one she played in her last film. It's an action film, and it certainly lives up to this label, even if the computer-generated sequences are a little uninspired. But even if you're one of the many who are totally fed up with tiresome, formulaic films of this type, there's plenty in *The Yellow Tree* to get excited about.

4 The reputation of professional footballers as a privileged money-grabbing elite hasn't done wonders for the image of professional athletes in general. Despite an overwhelming number of them being incredible examples of discipline and self-sacrifice that we should be encouraging all young people to emulate, the media seem to focus predominantly on the occasional online outburst on social media by otherwise admirable athletes.

5 A friend of mine recounted, at great length, an incident that took place on her commute home from work the other day. A man apparently refused to move from his seat to let an elderly passenger sit down. My friend's story was told in a way that suggested this was now a daily occurrence on our railways. In my forty years' experience of travelling on trains, I can honestly say that just as many rude people existed back then as do now and that the recent golden age that people like to talk about is simply a myth.

6 Having recently completed my first online diploma, I have to say that all the issues I'd had nightmares about prior to starting, about being unable to access virtual learning environments and so on, failed to materialise. It did take me far longer than I'd anticipated, though, largely thanks to there being no fixed deadlines for assignments. If I can put something off, then I will, which my academic supervisor wasn't too happy about, although having access to tutors seven days a week via email was a real plus point.

EXAM TASK

L20

Interviewer: Today's topic of discussion is technology, and I have with me journalist Yasmin Harvey, who specialises in writing about technology, and research scientist Guy Jameson. How did you end up working in technology, Guy?

Guy: I actually had to resist pressure from my parents and one of my favourite teachers to do what I do today. They knew that academically I was extremely bright, but, funnily enough, what enabled me to fight against their desire to see me do dentistry were films like *Star Wars*. While my friends all wanted to be the action hero, my aim was to be the one in the laboratory inventing these incredible new machines, not for the vast fortunes they would undoubtedly make me, but just for the sake of expanding the boundaries of what we can do.

Interviewer: And what drew you to science and technology, Yasmin?

Yasmin: Um – can I clear something up before I answer that? When you mention technology, the majority of people probably imagine something tangible, like the latest electronic gadget or spaceship, as Guy mentioned. Just so listeners are clear, and I'm sure that you'll both go along with what I say, it can also include more abstract things like innovative ideas or ways of doing things. Anyway, to answer your question, it just seemed to be the area with the most profound impact on all of our lives, I guess.

Interviewer: Has it become more difficult for researchers to secure government funding, Guy?

Guy: In many ways, yes. What's been welcome is the degree to which the complicated steps necessary just to request government money have been simplified. The real issue is that the pot of money that's shared out hasn't got any bigger. Little of the cash that's made from successful technology which emerges from government-funded research is used to fund future projects. Grants appear to get handed out to technology projects that seem thrilling, superficially at least, rather than to those that would be genuinely beneficial to society. That's the case regardless of whether it's in a lowly research institute or one of the country's top universities.

Interviewer: Yasmin, I believe you're soon publishing a book …

Yasmin: That's right. When I was considering ideas for it, I settled on the different ways that eminent people in the field of science and technology work, but then discovered that dozens of titles have been written on this previously. So I decided to answer the question of how variations in research procedures in diverse parts of the world affect the relative success there instead. As part of that, I've looked at regional similarities and differences in creative thinking, and at several inventions that have come about as a result of them.

Interviewer: Many have argued that controls are required to restrict certain new technologies. What are your views on that?

Yasmin: I can understand the reasoning behind this, but if we go down that route, there should be minimal regulation. Deciding which technologies should be subject to any controls and which organisations should be responsible for policing them is close to impossible. I can't see any industry within the tech field wanting to go along with imposing constraints.

Guy: As long as organisations know exactly what's okay and what's not, they're generally happy to do what they're told. Regulatory bodies with clear aims have been put in place many times before and are now successfully monitoring other sectors, so I don't see why that can't happen for research and technology. Whatever's decided, it should be done with a light touch – as little intervention as possible.

Interviewer: How do you both feel about the future of technology?

Guy: Increasing amounts of money are spent by industry as opposed to government on research, which should be welcomed. Without that, technology won't be able to provide the solutions to the ecological crisis we're now facing. The rapid expansion of the green technology sector will help absorb most of the job losses that are inevitable now other industries are turning to robots rather than humans. It's a global problem, so it's time to forget institutional and state differences and tackle it together.

Yasmin: Only by coming together and putting vast effort into cleaning up the planet can we reverse the environmental damage we've done. I worry about leaving this to companies whose principal aim is to make profits, and think an environment tax on industry is the way to fund it. Whichever way it's done, jobs will be created that'll offset the losses caused by automatic production methods.

LISTENING

Part 4

Practice task | Ex 1

L21

1 It wasn't as though I decided to sail solo across the Atlantic one day and was sailing the next. It took ages to prepare and I needed help from many other people. Thankfully, my employer was sympathetic, probably because they

thought doing an immensely dangerous and physical challenge to financially support a good friend who was seriously ill was an acceptable excuse! I'd never done anything like that before and had certainly never spent such a stretch of time on my own. It's given me a taste for it actually, so I wouldn't say no to having a go at something comparable in the near future, just perhaps not in a boat.

2 My friends weren't sure what possessed me to cycle across Australia on my own. I really thought they'd change their tune once I'd done it, but they still think I was mad to take it on. While it's true that there were a few moments that could've turned nasty, things like that always turn out OK. A common theme amongst those who've done something similar is that they're seeking something that's as different to the mundanities of day-to-day existence as possible. My motivation was more personal. I'd always avoided spending time by myself. The longer this went on, the more intimidating a prospect it became. The bike ride seemed like a perfect way to overcome that.

3 I walked from the far north east of North America to the far south west. It all started when the friend who was best man at my wedding poked fun at me for being so unfit. He said I'd never be able to walk more than twenty kilometres, so I just thought up the most ridiculous way imaginable to do it. I actually got a lot from it, so my intention now is to repeat the walk, but across South America instead. It'd be fun if a few of us decided to do it this time, not just me. I'm glad I did it, even though the time it took me was a little outside what I was hoping for.

Strategies and skills: Understanding the main point | Ex 2a

L22

1 Doing the training in augmented reality was, in hindsight, a mistake. One of my workmates is really into the technical aspects of IT and I'd got a bit fed up of always feeling one step behind her. I really thought that knowing about the topic would make her take my technical skills a bit more seriously. The problem was that I didn't really have enough background knowledge to cope with the content, which was all new. So, although it enabled me to have a change of scenery for part of the working week, apart from meeting a few interesting people, I can't say it was a success.

2 I make no secret of my desire to do well in my career, so many of the decisions I make at work tend to be based on how quickly I can climb the ladder. Choosing to do a management course was no different in this respect. It's not as though I don't have any management experience, of course, it's just that I'm aware of what criteria the top dogs in the company use when they're deciding who should move up, and your training record is high up on the list.

Strategies and skills: Understanding the main point | Ex 3

L23

It's been a more complicated process than I was expecting, as moving away from family was tough, but my first impressions of the place are largely positive. I still have the occasional doubt as to whether I should've stayed but I didn't have much choice in the end as my boss said that my skills were needed here. I'm a city girl at heart and this place just feels a little bit small to settle down in in the long term. Don't get me wrong! There's lots going on here and it's a popular place, but the prices of property and the cost of living reflect that. I'm hoping that I'll soon have a bit more say in where I end up once I'm a bit higher up in the company.

Strategies and skills: Understanding the main point | Ex 4a

L24

I'd spent a long time at more or less the other end of the country to my dad – in my profession, you just have to go where the work is. After I'd had children of my own, though, I thought it was only fair for them to see as much of their grandad as possible. It was only after moving that I realised how tired I'd grown of the tension and stress of city living and it's been a real revelation living in a small town again. It feels like we've lived here for years, even though it's only a few weeks since we moved. Hopefully some opportunities will come up soon to get to know all the neighbours.

Strategies and skills: Interpreting opinions | Ex 8

L25

1 My original plan was to do some independent study towards my degree subject, so as not to completely lose the habit of being in education, and to earn some money to help pay the university fees and living costs. I foolishly gave myself a couple of months off before doing either, which of course stretched to three. It then took a few weeks to actually find something suitable, but I was then too tired to study. So, at the end of it, I feel like I've lost momentum with education and haven't earned anywhere near as much as I'd hoped either.

2 Taking a gap year is the best thing I could have done. I feel like I've really regained the love of learning and natural curiosity about the world that had slowly faded over thirteen years of full-time study. I hadn't even noticed that it was a problem until I actually stopped! I'd seriously recommend it to anyone going onto university or into work. I have no doubt that I'll do much better in the long term, having recharged my batteries.

3 I was the only one in my peer group who decided to have a gap year. I don't regret it at all as it's enabled me to go off travelling for a few months. However, while they all talk about what life is like on campus wherever they're studying when we meet, I want to tell them about visiting temples in Asia and things like that. It seems that, all of a sudden, we have very little in common with each other.

4 A few of my friends took a year off too and we set up a little business together creating websites for several months, then used the money we made to go to South America for the remaining time. I actually learnt tons of Spanish while we were there and some of the companies we worked with before we went now want us to continue maintaining and updating the sites for them as well. It hasn't put me off the idea of studying at university, but it'll provide some really useful income while I'm there.

5 Having a few months of doing something other than full-time education gave me the space to look objectively at the decisions I'd made about which course to study at

university. I think I'd chosen it out of desperation as I simply couldn't think of what better to do. As the year passed, though, it became apparent that I should actually be heading in a different direction, so I contacted the university and arranged to swap to something much more suited to me.

Strategies and skills: Identifying attitude and feelings | Ex 10

L26

1 When I was nineteen, I decided to give up a university course partway through and go off travelling. My personal tutor begged me to reconsider and suggested seeing the university careers service too, but of course at that age, I thought I knew best. I didn't even tell my parents until it was too late. I hadn't really considered any of the consequences, which I'm sure those who were a bit older and wiser than I was would've pointed out to me, had I taken the trouble to ask.

2 About a year ago, I decided I wanted to live on my own as I'd lived with either family or friends all my life. Finding a flat was easy and I was so excited when I picked the keys up from the estate agents. Walking into the empty flat was one of the most bizarre experiences of my life, though. I'd never felt so alone, and all the fantasies I'd had about how great it'd be to have my own place just collapsed around me, and I wanted nothing more than to be back in the house I shared with friends.

3 Three years ago, I set up my own business as a management consultant. Several former colleagues had done the same thing. What I failed to take into account was that all but one of them had gone back into paid employment within a few months. I'd been in the sector long enough to realise it was entering a bit of a downturn. I honestly thought that I would be different and that my venture into self-employment would succeed where theirs had failed. How wrong could I have been?

4 In hindsight, it wasn't the best decision I've ever made, to say the least. I'd just inherited quite a bit of money and was wondering what I should do with it. One morning, for reasons I still can't really explain, I suddenly decided to go out and buy a sports car. I'd never been that careful with money anyway, and by the end of the day, it was more or less all gone. I enjoyed the car for a while but then it dawned on me what I'd done. I can laugh about it now, but I've been far more careful with my finances ever since.

5 A few colleagues of mine had planned to go on holiday together, and when one of them fell ill and couldn't go they asked if I wanted to join them instead. They were literally going the next day and would have had just a few hours to find someone else, so I didn't have long to let them know either way. Anyway, the first few days were fine but then the arguments started. I wasn't the cause, I might add, but I couldn't help but become involved. It created a horrible atmosphere and a couple of them still won't talk to me, even at work, which isn't ideal.

Strategies and skills: Correcting mistakes | Ex 11

L27

1 I got into climbing six months ago. I've always been sporty, and am pretty good at rugby and cricket, but I wouldn't describe many of the skills I developed in those sports as transferable to climbing. I've improved dramatically as a climber, thanks largely to living within a hundred metres of the best climbing centre in the region and two friends who are as keen to go there several times a week as I am. I was aware of the sport's popularity, due to the number of people I saw arriving at the centre, but had little idea that many of them were going there to admire the expert climbers rather than to climb the walls themselves.

2 When you watch any expert doing their sport, they make it look effortless. So when I came to try ice hockey, I had these expectations that you just slide around on the ice without a great deal of exertion. How wrong I was! I ran out of energy far quicker than when I play football or basketball, and still do. I've actually made it onto my local team, which is quite an achievement, given that I've been playing for less than a year. I was encouraged to push myself from the very start, mainly by the other players rather than the trainers funnily enough. It's like being part of an extended sporting family.

3 My first dive after I joined a diving club was a bit of a disaster, because I actually slipped on the diving board and landed on my back! Fortunately, I've improved a lot since then. My coach has trained hundreds of people over the years. Some of them have to work really hard to become good, whereas others just seem to be able to do it well with a minimum of practice. I'm one of the latter, apparently, which is nice to know. Great divers are very elegant, so they don't look like the kind of people who would do anything just to beat their opponents. They definitely would though!

4 Cricket isn't that popular in my home country, Canada, so when I moved to the UK recently and saw the local club playing a game, I was curious. I went to the next practice session and am already playing for their first team. What I didn't appreciate when I watched that first game was how precise you have to be when you bat. One tiny error and that's game over because you're out. I like that challenge. There's far more to consider than in baseball, which I played in Canada, although the ability that I developed there, to hit a ball in the middle of a bat, has certainly played a large part in my cricketing success.

EXAM TASK

L28

1 When I saw the advert, I just thought 'this is my dream job'! It's not often that when I think something like that it actually turns out to be true. I've yet to meet anyone here who doesn't focus on the solution to problems, rather than on the problems themselves. It's so refreshing! I do have to spend time during my journey to the office thinking about what the day's likely to bring. Working out which of the day's tasks I need to start off with and which I can leave till later actually takes far more thinking than you'd imagine and, even now, I usually get it wrong.

2 Starting in any new position is tiring and can seem a bit like operating in a fog for the first few weeks, but the new job's gone relatively smoothly. I think I've got my head around what everyone there does, but what I need to do when I'm using some of their company software is still a bit of a mystery to me – I haven't come across anything as complex as that before. Judging by what I've seen so far, company policy is to move people up within the organisation as soon as they're ready for the increased responsibility, so I'm really hoping that I'll be capable of doing that before too long.

3 I've been in my new post for two weeks now and I've yet to actually do any real work, which is quite unusual. Up till now, we've been looking at company policies and procedures, meeting all the staff, visiting the different sites and so on. I already feel like I understand the organisation far more than my previous one, even though I was there for two years – very impressive! One thing I've been asked to do is arrange meetings with my two immediate line reports but they've not responded to any of the emails I've sent. I'm sure someone would have told me if they were away on holiday.

4 I think my introduction to the company consisted of a ten-minute tour and a quick meet-and-greet with a few of the staff, then it was straight down to work. I wasn't really sure I was up to several of the tasks they'd given me to do, and would've preferred more training first, but they seem happy enough with my progress so far. I've certainly enjoyed doing it, even if I don't always know whether what I'm doing is good enough or not. It involves the kind of problem-solving that really gets you thinking. I get so into it that before I know it it's the end of the day.

5 I feel very fortunate to have got a job with the company I work for now. They seem to have a unique approach to everything they do, from the products they create to the way staff are managed, and even how their offices and factory look. There was certainly a lot of competition for jobs there. I was told that over a hundred and fifty people had applied for my job. To be honest, they could've done with employing a couple of other people as well as me. There's certainly more than enough to do and perhaps then I wouldn't have to take stuff home to do in the evening and at weekends.

SPEAKING

Part 1

Practice task | Ex 1

S01

See page 88.

Strategies and skills: Giving reasons | Ex 8

S02

1 Yes, the one I've most enjoyed in the last few weeks was called *Seven Weeks*. It tells the story of a man's journey back to civilisation after the small plane he was flying crashed in a rainforest. The reason I liked it so much was that you didn't know until the end if he'd survive or not. It was a really exciting film.

2 Well, my favourite type of holiday is one in which I do lots of different activities. I'm not someone who likes lying on a beach for two weeks. It would therefore be somewhere I could do lots of different things, for example scuba diving, swimming, visiting interesting places, and so on. I like to keep busy, even on holiday.

3 I think it's fairly important, but I don't think it's possible for friends to have exactly the same interests as each other. They may have one or two in common, but not all. I think it helps to keep the friendship growing if you do certain activities you both enjoy together, but it's good to have your own interests too.

4 I'm not sure I'd exactly describe myself as that, but in some respects, I can be quite organised. For example, I like arranging weekend football competitions, so I have to communicate with many different people about when and where it's happening, etc. At home, though, I don't seem to have quite as much discipline!

EXAM TASK

S03

See page 90.

SPEAKING

Part 2

Practice task | Ex 3a

S04

Examiner: In this part of the test, I'd like you to talk about these two pictures for about a minute. They show pairs of people performing in different situations. Compare the pictures, and say why the people might have chosen to perform in these situations and how the people might be feeling.

Student A: Um … in the first photo, there's a pair of street musicians performing in the street somewhere. I think the musicians have chosen to play here because they want to make a bit of money from their music. There's a guitar case on the pavement in front of them for people to throw money onto. I also think, though, that they're doing it to bring a bit of pleasure to people who are out and about in the city, just doing everyday things like shopping. My guess is that the two guys are feeling pretty relaxed right at that moment. I imagine that they're pretty skilled musicians and they're not performing in a high-pressure situation, so they won't be too worried about making mistakes. They're just out to have fun and make some money while they're doing it. The pair of actors in the second photo, on the other hand, are being watched by a large audience who have presumably all paid quite a bit of money to watch the play that they're in. The open-air theatre they're in is right by the sea and it looks like the kind of place tourists go to as a treat when they're on holiday, so it'd probably be pretty expensive. They're therefore under a lot of pressure to perform well, unlike the two musicians in the first photo, so could well be feeling quite stressed even though they're almost certainly very experienced actors. I think they've chosen to act there because it's a spectacular place to perform and, on a personal level, it's quite a high-status event to be involved with.

Student B: There are two photos of pairs of people performing in public. The first one looks as though it's in the UK as there are a couple of the famous red telephone boxes behind two street musicians. One of the musicians is standing up playing the drums, special drums that you play with your hands and not with sticks, while the other one is sitting and playing an electric guitar. As I said, they're in front of two red phone boxes, on the street, maybe in a big city like London. They look like they're pretty relaxed and are probably there to make some money. The second photo shows two actors on an outdoor stage. The actors are in what looks like an ancient theatre, and we can see the sea right behind it. There's a large audience watching them, so they're probably feeling fairly nervous. They've chosen to perform there because it's a great place to be in a play.

Strategies and skills: Comparing | Ex 4

S05

The two pictures show people who are involved in very different kinds of discussion. In the first picture, we can see a group of people who are

all having a business discussion, most probably at their workplace. Most of the people are seated around a table and are listening or taking notes. One woman is standing in front of a screen and is perhaps talking the others through some figures or other information that she's presenting. The second picture, however, shows five people, who are probably friends or coursemates. The people are all very relaxed in the second photo, which is in some contrast to the first picture, in which everyone looks more business-like and serious. I imagine that the people in the first picture are discussing important business issues as a means of moving the company forward in some way. This is significantly different to the discussion in the second picture where they are laughing and having a friendly chat. Personally, I think taking part in the business discussion would be far harder than that shown in the other one. You have to know a lot of background information to have a discussion of this kind and perhaps have a strong personality if you want your way of doing things to be accepted. A chat with friends or coursemates, on the other hand, is always much more laid-back and far less stressful to take part in.

Strategies and skills: Speculating | Ex 6

S06

Student A: I'd guess that if you don't use your teamwork skills when you're working as a chef in a busy kitchen, none of the meals will reach the customers in good time, so they won't recommend the restaurant to people they know. You're also likely to get shouted at by the head chef!

I imagine that it could be incredibly difficult if you don't get on with the other members of the team. If you all work well together, though, I suppose that it would be really enjoyable.

Student B: I'd assume that creating dishes in a restaurant kitchen is quite a complicated process with different people responsible for different parts of the dish, so without good teamwork it would be a disaster!

It could be the case that people who are good at coping with stress will thrive in this kind of work, but if you prefer a quiet life you'll probably find it extremely difficult.

EXAM TASK

S07

See pages 96 and 97.

SPEAKING

Part 3

Practice task | Ex 1

S08

See page 98.

Practice task | Ex 2

S09

Student A: Well, looking at this first prompt, I think choosing a suitable university is incredibly important. You need one that has a good reputation, and I think it's essential that it isn't somewhere that is, like, right round the other side of the world, so you can get home easily for holidays and things. And, of course, it's got to be somewhere that you really want to spend time in. What do you think?

1

Student A: Yes, I agree. And, of course, you have to make sure that you're good enough at the language that the teaching's going to be delivered in. You have to be at a pretty high level before you can study for a degree in another language.

2

Student A: True. How important do you think it is to stay in touch with friends and family while you're studying in another country?

3

Student A: Yes. I think cost's incredibly important too.

Practice task | Ex 3 and Ex 4

S10 and S11

Examiner: Now, talk to each other about how important these things might be for someone to study successfully in another country.

Student A: Well, looking at this first prompt, I think choosing a suitable university is incredibly important. You need one that has a good reputation, and I think it's essential that it isn't somewhere that is, like, right round the other side of the world, so you can get home easily for holidays and things. And, of course, it's got to be somewhere that you really want to spend time in. What do you think?

Student B: I think what you said is true. It's no use going to study at a university no one's heard of, or to study at a university that's in a country that you have no real interest in. What's equally important is that it's somewhere that has a respected education system. There's little point in getting a degree that employers or universities in your own country don't really recognise. And, of course, some universities within each country have better reputations than others.

Student A: Yes, I agree. And, of course, you have to make sure that you're good enough at the language that the teaching's going to be delivered in. You have to be at a pretty high level before you can study for a degree in another language.

Student B: I totally agree. It's recognised that the level of language you need for functioning well in an academic environment is much higher than what you need if you're just using the language socially. And the great thing is that you'll be developing your skills in another language as well as getting a qualification. So then, you need to choose a country where they speak a language that's actually going to be useful for you to learn, one that you're going to use in the future or will be an advantage for getting jobs.

Student A: True. How important do you think it is to stay in touch with friends and family while you're studying in another country?

Student B: Oh, it's absolutely essential, without a doubt. You're going to be much happier if you're in regular contact with everyone back home. But the thing is, I don't think that would have any impact whatsoever on where you choose to study, as staying in touch with them will be the same wherever you are in the world. You can't possibly do well at university if you're not happy, and part of that comes from speaking to the people you love regularly.

Student A: Yes. I think cost's incredibly important too. You have to choose somewhere that you can actually afford to study, both in terms of how much the fees are to study there and also the cost of living in the city and country you end up in.

Student B: This is a really important thing to consider because you wouldn't be living at home anymore, so it's going to be expensive. If you're worrying about money all the time, you won't be able to concentrate on studying.

Student A: No, so perhaps getting a part-time job will help, and will also be a good way of meeting people other than those you're studying with.

Student B: Yes, because developing a good social life is really important too.

Student A: I agree. Getting to know lots of people, especially if they're local, is a great way to find out more about the culture of the country you're in and to find out the best places to go and see.

Student B: Yes and, after all, there's nothing worse than being away from home and feeling lonely.

Practice task | Ex 5a and Ex 5b

S12 and S13

Examiner: Thank you. Now you have about a minute to decide which of these things is most important in order to study successfully at a university in another country.

Student B: It's really hard to decide because they all seem so important. If I were to choose one, though, I think I'd have to go for choosing a suitable university.

Student A: Um, why do you think that?

Student B: Well, I think it's because a lot of the others seem to depend on your choice of university. If you decide on a university that's in a city which has a great nightlife, for example, where it's really part of the culture there, you're very likely to be able to develop a good social life, which means you'll hopefully use and develop your language skills more, and so on.

Student A: I guess that's all true, but having a great social life is only a part of being able to study successfully. You're going to this country to study at university after all, and if you haven't got the language skills to be able to communicate well or learn effectively there, you're never going to be successful. If you can't understand the lectures and teachers, and even the other students, you're going to fail, however busy you are in your free time.

Student B: Hmm, I see what you mean. I hadn't really thought of it like that. I was thinking more of the experience as a whole rather than about how successful the studying would be. In that case, I'll go along with what you said. Yes, there's no way you can succeed academically without being able to communicate well.

Examiner: Thank you.

Strategies and skills: Interacting in a two-way conversation | Ex 3 and Ex 4

S14 and S15

Examiner: Now talk to each other about the advantages and disadvantages of having a relaxing break in these different ways.

Student A: Well, thinking first about listening to music, my view on this is that it's a perfect way of winding down during breaks because you forget all your stress of work or study and just get lost in what you're listening to.

Student B: I appreciate what you're saying, however listening to music's actually the last thing I'd do during a break because there aren't many types that I find relaxing. It's a far better idea to meet with friends and unwind by having a chat and a coffee together.

Student A: I'm not convinced that's true. As far as I'm concerned, meeting friends during a break isn't a great idea because if you get deeply involved in a conversation, you can really lose track of the time and get behind with whatever it is you've got to do.

Student B: So, what are your thoughts about going for a walk as a way of relaxing?

Student A: From my perspective, it's a great way to relax. For example, I was struggling with something at work last week so I went for a walk to the park and the answer just came into my head as I was walking. It was amazing. How about you?

Student B: Yes, I think it really helps you to relax. The only disadvantage is if there isn't anywhere nice to go for a walk near where you work or where you're studying.

Student A: Wouldn't you agree that having something to eat is good too? For example, I usually have some fruit during my morning break and I feel as though I've got more energy afterwards.

Student B: Well, if you ask me, having something to eat isn't always a good idea because afterwards, you can feel a little bit sleepy and it's actually quite hard to start working again. How do you feel about checking your phone as a way of relaxing during breaks?

Student A: My opinion is that checking your phone definitely isn't the best thing to do because there are often messages that you need to respond to and so on, and it can end up being more stressful than the work or study you're supposed to be escaping from.

Student B: That's a really clear way of explaining it! I feel exactly the same, although that doesn't usually stop me from doing it!

Student A: Me neither!

Strategies and skills: Negotiating towards a decision | Ex 8

S16

1

Student A: OK, so having discussed all the options, we really need to make a decision. Do you think this one's the most important?

Student B: Yes, I think we're both of the opinion that problem-solving is the most important.

Student A: Great, so that's decided that, then.

2

Student A: OK, well let's rule out this one as being the most important then, shall we?

Student B: Yes, because neither of us thought that was significant. Actually, I don't think we're ever going to agree about which one's most important.

Student A: No, probably not.

3

Student A: OK, so are you telling me that this is the most important one?

Student B: Yes, definitely, and I think you were saying the same thing, weren't you?

Student A: I was! Great! So, we've both decided on problem-solving as being the most important.

4

Student A: So, shall we choose a different one then, if we don't agree on that?

Student B: OK, but I think that we'll just have to agree to disagree about which is the most important.

Student A: Yes, I think we've got very different opinions about it, haven't we?

EXAM TASK

S17

See page 101.

SPEAKING

Part 4

Practice task | Ex 1

S18

See page 102.

Practice task | Ex 2–5

S19–22

1 Do you think that certain people are naturally much better at certain workplace skills than others? Why? Why not?

Student A: I think so, yes. I guess it's probably to do with genetics, so that if one or both of your parents is really good at being organised, for example, then you probably will be naturally good at it too. But I don't think that stops anyone else becoming good at being organised too.

Student B: I was just going to say something similar to your last point, actually. I think anyone can become good at a certain skill if they practise enough. The difference is in just how good they become, so someone who's naturally better at giving workplace presentations, for instance, will be better than someone who isn't after the same amount of practice.

2 Do you think work experience programmes would be beneficial for students who are still at school? Why? Why not?

Student B: I think so, yes. School is so different to working life, so a work experience programme would be a great way to introduce school students to employment. I think it should happen towards the end of their school careers, so they don't lose study time when they really need it, but I think it's a good idea.

Student A: I agree with you, as I think schools have a much more academic focus than a vocational one. They do provide some of the basic skills you need for many different jobs, such as reading, writing and working closely with other people, but using these skills in the classroom and knowing how to put them into practice in the workplace are two different things. There's nothing better for preparing students for the world of work than direct experience with employers.

Student B: I can't think of any jobs I was ready to start when I left school.

Student A: Me neither!

3 Which do you think is more important for being successful in the workplace, knowledge and qualifications or experience? Why?

Student A: I think you need all of these things to be a really good employee, but if I had to say which one was more important, I'd go for the experience. What about you?

Student B: Yeah, I agree with you, but I don't think it's as simple as choosing one or the other. For example, if you're studying, you're developing your knowledge but you might also get quite a lot of experience of some tasks and skills while you're working towards your qualification.

Student A: True, but someone who has a lot of experience at doing a job is always going to be better at it than someone who doesn't.

4 Who do you think should pay for workers to develop new skills in their jobs, the employer or the employee? Why?

Student B: Oh, the employer, definitely. They're the ones who will benefit the most from the employee developing the new skills, so I think it's only fair that they should pay for the training.

Student A: I'm not so sure, you know … I mean, suppose an employer spends thousands of pounds or dollars or whatever training an employee on how to use a particular piece of software. Then after a few weeks, the employee uses the new skills they've gained to get a better-paid job with another company. The first employer has basically lost all of the money they've invested in that employee.

Student B: Well, I'd go along with you in that it's not fair on the employer, but maybe they should have paid the employee more and it wouldn't have happened … No, seriously though, companies can put it in employees' contracts that if they leave within a certain time after they've received some training, they have to pay the money back.

Student A: That's a really good idea, actually.

Strategies and skills: Justifying your opinions | Ex 5

S23

1 Do you think people should learn more than one foreign language at school?

Student A: If they want to, yes – but they shouldn't be forced into it. To give you an example from my own experience, I've been learning three languages at school – English, French and Russian – and I think that learning more than one has actually helped me to get better at all of them.

2 Why do you think some people find it harder to make decisions than others?

Student B: I guess it's because of their personality. I have a friend who finds decision-making almost impossible. They're quite an anxious person, which is probably why. I'm a bit more confident than they are so I don't find it so difficult.

3 How do you think young people can be encouraged to take on more responsibilities?

Student C: I think the best way is for adults to push them a bit more. What really helped me to do this was when my teacher started asking me to do things that I found challenging, like leading a debate on plastic pollution. I was naturally a bit shy so wouldn't have normally put my hand up to take on something like that.

Strategies and skills: Developing a discussion | Ex 10 and Ex 11

S24 and S25

1 Do you agree that banning all motor vehicles from city centres is a good idea?

Student A: Yes, I do – definitely. They did this in a city in my country that's not far from my home town. The difference it made was amazing. If they did the same thing in all cities, it would certainly make them more pleasant places to live, work and visit. I mean, the pollution in them is terrible.

Student B: I hear what you're saying but I'm not sure I totally agree with you. It would reduce pollution for sure, but it would also stop lorries and vans delivering to all of the shops there. Many of the customers in those shops drive to the city and park there, maybe because they live in an area where the public transport isn't so good.

2 Do you think people worry about the environment too much these days?

Student B: No, not at all. In fact, it's such a big problem that they should be anxious about it, actually, because the changes we need to make aren't

happening quickly enough. If anyone is even a little bit anxious about it, hopefully their concerns will push them to do more to help.

Student A: I agree with you. What I'd also say is that it's something we all need to address. It's not just something the government should sort out – it's up to all of us to help.

3 How do you think people can be encouraged to save energy and water?

Student A: I think the best way is if they could be made cheaper for anyone who uses very little of them. That would be a really good way of reducing how much people use.

Student B: Is it OK if I make a point about that too?

Student A: Of course.

Student B: Well, I think part of the problem is that people just don't know how to do it so they need to be shown what to do. Perhaps there could be adverts on TV showing ways of doing this.

Student A: Good idea!

4 Some people think that the environment is already too badly damaged to fix. Do you agree?

Student B: No, I don't agree at all. Any problem can be solved if we put in enough time, money and effort.

Student A: If I could, I'd really like to add something to what you've said. If we think this is true, then we might as well just give up now, but in fact the technology already exists to reverse the problems – we just need to do it.

5 Do you think that all countries need to work closely together to solve environmental problems?

Student A: I couldn't agree more. It's called global warming, not national warming, so it's everyone's problem. And if it's everyone's problem, then it's up to all of us to solve it. I know lots of countries don't get on, but they need to forget their political differences because it's such a big issue.

Student B: If they don't, it will make the whole problem much more difficult to deal with. And in addition to the ideas you mentioned, I'd also say that many scientists from many different countries are already working closely together, but at government level this needs to be happening much more.

Student A: I totally agree.

EXAM TASK

S26

See page 105.

Practice Exam

LISTENING

Part 1

PE01

Extract 1

You hear two friends discussing the topic of advertising.

F: I'm researching an essay on advertising at the moment.

M: Oh yeah? I'd swear that the time between commercials somehow gets shorter every time I switch the television on.

F: That's the impression I get too. They're frustrating, but at least there's the occasional one that's just as, if not more, enjoyable than the actual programme.

M: I've yet to see one that's made me think that way, but maybe one day … I suppose the fact that there's advertising everywhere these days must mean it works incredibly well.

F: Companies wouldn't do it otherwise – I mean, it costs them millions.

M: There's lots of pressure at the moment to stop any adverts appearing on websites and during TV shows aimed at kids …

F: Ah … yes, I'm not sure the government would go along with it, as it generates business, but my guess is that plenty of parents would. I can't help feeling that it puts toy manufacturers at a bit of a disadvantage, though, as no other sector's prevented from showing adverts to its target market. I don't suppose a few toy companies going out of business would bring the whole country to its knees economically, but it would certainly have a big impact on the people working for them.

Extract 2

You hear part of a discussion programme in which two journalists are talking about the theatre.

M: Whilst we're on the subject of theatre attendance, it seems to me as though many theatres are overly obsessed with having a full house. Limiting the cost of a certain number of seats for each performance is no guarantee of bringing this about, of course, so instead they've gone down the route of exclusively staging pieces created by someone audiences will have heard of. It's their name that then appears centre stage, so to speak, in any advertising material the theatre produces. I'm not doubting the quality of the work, but it does lead to up-and-coming talent being excluded from the majority of theatres nationwide.

F: I'm sure listeners are all too aware of why some theatres are being forced to adopt such a strategy, so I don't think we need to dwell on this. What I object to, though, is that this approach is anywhere near as widespread as you're claiming. Sure, a small number of the biggest and most high-profile theatres may be doing this, but that leaves an awful lot of other establishments throughout the capital and the country as a whole which are doing the exact opposite.

Extract 3

You hear a woman telling a friend about living on a houseboat.

M: You've been living on your houseboat for a couple of years now. How's it going?

F: Pretty good, although it could do with a few repairs.

M: Oh? Is it turning out to need more doing to it than you originally thought?

F: It takes time to sort out, but it's just general maintenance stuff, which all houseboats need. Having made it through my second winter, I'm not completely sure how many more I can stand. The owners of the boats around mine just laugh when they hear me moaning about how cold it is, and ask me what I was expecting. I guess I should have known.

M: Well, you can never tell. My brother bought an old cottage in the countryside a few years ago. He phoned me up after he'd first looked round it, telling me how great it was. Then a few weeks after he moved in, he suddenly realised it wasn't for him after all. The reasons he gave were all things you could have predicted beforehand, like the lack of facilities, but sometimes you just don't know until you actually go and experience it for yourself. It might seem like a mistake, but I don't see it that way at all.

LISTENING

Part 2

PE02

Hi, everyone. My name's Sandra Ibbotson, and I'm a marine biology student. I was lucky enough to be part of a recent research expedition studying Greenland sharks in their cold native waters.

I was really excited as we set sail from Bergen in Norway with a variety of students and research scientists on board. There were seven of us from the UK, including the head of my university department, six from Denmark, one of whom sorted out the team, the financing and the boat, and several from Sweden. One of the Swedish scientists is probably the world's foremost expert on Greenland sharks.

Over a hundred students applied for the expedition, many of whom had been studying marine predators for several years. The organisers were keen to take someone who'd done plenty of filming underwater before, though, which is why I ended up going. The students were there primarily to help out with practical stuff like that.

One thing I really wasn't prepared for was how rough the sea could get at times. I think the closest I can get to explaining what it's like on the boat during a storm is for you to imagine how your clothes must feel inside your washing machine. That's probably a more accurate description than a colleague's comparison of being on a rollercoaster in a fairground.

As for the research itself, well, the research scientists all worked for an international research programme. It's recently been discovered that Greenland sharks have the longest lifespan of any vertebrate, so they hoped to investigate that further. Over and above this, however, was the need to discover more about their migration, which was a complete mystery.

During the expedition, the scientists shared their knowledge about Greenland sharks. I'd already heard about their amazingly poor eyesight – which is seldom a hindrance, as they generally stay in the dark ocean depths – but one scientist informed us about their extraordinarily slow heart rate, which helps them cope with the extreme cold by beating only six times a minute.

Until recently, it was assumed that Greenland sharks' diet consisted of dead animals they find on the ocean floor, such as whales. It's become apparent, though, that they actively hunt their prey too. I'd never have considered polar bears to be something they'd target, but remains of them, as well as of seals, have been found in Greenland sharks' stomachs.

I was fortunate enough to dive with Greenland sharks we encountered. I'd heard they could appear as though they'd run out of energy due to their slow movements. The ones I saw were quite purposeful, but unlike many of the other species I'd dived with, they never showed any aggression, which was curious for such large sharks.

The scientists explained that their research into Greenland sharks might have a wider application beyond marine biology. A project analysing whale behaviour that one of them had previously been involved with, for instance, also ended up helping climate change research. Perhaps surprisingly, they're hoping that studies of certain human illnesses could well be informed by some of the discoveries related to why Greenland sharks live so long.

LISTENING

Part 3

PE03

Interviewer: On today's programme we have two journalists who specialise in writing about the environment, Karen Brearley and Ian Gill. Karen, you recently published an article about limiting flights to all but essential ones, with immediate effect. It's caused quite a bit of controversy …

Karen: Yes, and it would've got under even more people's skins if my boss hadn't toned it down. I can understand why she wanted to do that, even if I didn't really go along with how she did it. I was a bit taken aback by a few of my colleagues' comments, though, as they appeared to suggest that my central argument was flawed, which I refute totally, of course. According to the online comments, it seems to have outraged more general readers than environmental researchers, who largely agree with me. I'm not holding my breath for any great change in the national mood about the issue, though.

Interviewer: What's your take on Karen's proposals for limiting flights, Ian?

Ian: I can understand the idea behind it, as air travel has an undoubted effect on global warming, but so does something like playing sport, if you think about it. Each sport requires the use of manufactured goods and sometimes special places to do it, from balls and bats up to swimming pools and stadiums. All of these take energy to produce, thereby harming the environment. Yet no one would propose an overnight ban on sport – this would be seen as too drastic a measure. I'm in total agreement that something needs to be done, it's just the pace of the implementation I'd question. Alternative employment would need to be developed for the workforce, for instance.

Interviewer: But the statistics relating to the aviation industry's impact on the environment make for quite alarming reading …

Ian: I agree, and the figures in the press only actually tell us one small part of the overall picture. I'm not suggesting that what we're told by the airlines is in any way inaccurate, but it generally relates to how much carbon dioxide aeroplanes produce. Even the most recent statistics fail to take account of the emissions that result from refining the fuel for the aircraft, or in the running of airports or even the production of the aircraft themselves.

Interviewer: Surely technological improvements in design will result in less environmentally damaging aircraft …

Karen: Er, they will, but I suspect it won't be enough. While there have been incredibly rapid leaps forward with automobiles and trains, for example, these have centred on converting them from fossil fuel-burning engines to electric motors. There's a general consensus that, however much time and effort you put into attempting the same thing with aircraft, motors will never be sufficiently powerful to lift something as heavy as an airliner off the ground. So developers are defeated before they've even begun.

Interviewer: A question to you both, now. Do governments do enough to help on this issue?

Ian: Very few nations argue against policies that are aimed at allowing a greater number of flights. Those in power want to allow massive growth in travel and tourism yet, at the same time promise huge cuts in emissions. Modest increases in taxes on both aviation fuel and tickets have made little, if any, difference.

Karen: I think that introducing tighter emissions tests on aeroplanes, like we have on many cars, is a way forward, but it's certainly hard to reconcile many governments' conflicting aims on supporting green issues, whilst at the same time promoting ways of getting people and goods around the country and around the world that are ecologically harmful.

Interviewer: And what can you and other individuals do to help?

Ian: I guess flying less is the obvious answer!

Karen: Yes, or giving it up altogether, which is practically impossible. I've taken to travelling only during daylight hours, as the vapour trails that planes produce reflect the sun's rays back into space, counteracting the effect of harmful emissions somewhat. My biggest concession is using only the carriers that offer the cheapest tickets. They tend to pack their planes with people, so are more ecological in terms of passenger miles. Business class was never something I indulged in, so my conscience is clear on that one.

Ian: Mine too! I'd like to say I'm a less frequent flyer these days, but I'm afraid the reverse is actually true. I always choose the cheapest flights, as the airlines offering these usually operate newer, more efficient aircraft. I'm not sure I'd ever have guessed that the time of day made such a difference environmentally, so I'll add that to my list of strategies too.

Interviewer: Thank you both very much.

LISTENING

Part 4

PE04

1

One of my friends decided to have a gap year too. Our motivations for doing so couldn't have been more different. Whilst I was not exactly wholeheartedly discovering whether I'd be able to turn a lifelong love of music into a professional career, she went off to see how many stamps from different countries she could get in her passport. Oddly enough, learning that I was probably never going to be a good enough musician helped me to focus my energies on the academic alternative, and my career beyond this. I guess I figured that if I couldn't make it in one vocation, I'd stop at absolutely nothing to succeed in the other.

2

There have been some unforeseen yet welcome consequences of having a gap year. I was deeply concerned that going back into education afterwards would feel incredibly daunting. I seem to have unexpectedly regained my enthusiasm for studying, though, so my worries proved unfounded. I feel as though my decisions are now being made from an adult perspective, rather than from that of a school student. In my final year at school, I was torn between studying medicine or veterinary science at university. The answer to this seemingly impossible dilemma was pretty easy to arrive at, once I wasn't devoting all my energies to schoolwork, so the aim of the year out has definitely been met.

3

The sports science course I've wanted to do for some time is far more practical in nature than something like nutrition. I've played sport for as long as I can remember, but have always been coached rather than coaching others. I decided to use the time the gap year afforded me to put this right, which has also allowed me to make additions to my CV that prospective employers might find attractive. Coaching full-time is hard, and the respect I have for my mum and dad, who've held down jobs as teachers for however many years to support me and my sisters, has grown as a result.

4

I was expecting that the break from studying would allow me to recharge my batteries so I'd be ready to go full speed into a degree. Funnily enough, it's had completely the opposite effect, leaving me pondering whether higher education's for me after all. My family isn't that well-off, so I'd decided to find work wherever I could so I'd have enough for the tuition fees and living costs. An uncle who has his own construction company heard what I wanted to do and, knowing that I wanted to study architecture, found me a job. I'm enjoying it so much, and I can pay rent to my parents too, so I may end up staying.

5

I've always admired people who finish school then go off to broaden their knowledge of other countries and cultures, and I really wanted to follow their example. My teachers knew that my heart was set on a career in journalism, but as I neared the end of my final school year, they kept warning me that I'd have to improve my spelling and grammar if I wanted to make it in that profession. I decided to do just that for a year, before I started the journalism course. I've changed a lot during the year and have become far more sensible and responsible, which I think will serve me well when I start college.

SPEAKING

Part 1

PE05

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SPEAKING

Part 2

PE06

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SPEAKING

Part 3

PE07

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SPEAKING

Part 4

PE08

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