

ENGLISH FILE 4TH EDITION ADVANCED AUDIO SCRIPTS

PROGRESS TESTS

PROGRESS TEST FILES 1–5

Listening 1

Speaker 1 It never fails to shock me. I mean, I've had it for over a year so I thought I'd have got used to it by now, but no, not yet, and I doubt I ever will. I'm a pretty heavy sleeper so I needed to buy a really loud one – one that would actually provoke a response. The sound is almost sickening – a tremendous rattling noise that makes my whole head vibrate. And I have to put it on the other side of the room too – so I have to physically get up, go over to it, and switch it off. Otherwise I'd just hit the snooze button and go straight back to sleep! I've tried using one of those ones that gradually light up and get brighter and brighter, but they don't really work for me so I guess I'll just have to stick with the noisy one.

Speaker 2 It just reminds me of my childhood summer holidays. We'd go camping on the coast – a really wild, remote place in the middle of nowhere – and it was quiet there. There was no traffic noise, no other people for miles around. In fact, we rarely saw any other people ... perhaps the odd farmer or group of hill walkers. It was so refreshingly peaceful ... but even though it 'seemed' quiet, there was still this constant sound in the background, almost part of the quietness because it was so constant, so comforting. Whenever I hear it now, even if it's on a nature documentary on TV, I'm instantly transported back in time. It's the most relaxing sound I've ever heard.

Speaker 3 It was really weird, you know. Where I'm from, it's considered to be impolite so no one ever does it, and if they do it by accident, they always apologize immediately. But in Japan, it's actually the opposite – if you don't do it, it's impolite ... So, of course, I knew it was important to give it a try. The first time I attempted it, it went badly wrong. The sound came out suddenly and really loudly and I ended up choking – it was really embarrassing! Anyway, I'm not one to give up easily so I persevered and eventually managed to get over my

embarrassment. By the end of my time there, it felt natural. I became so accustomed to it that I eventually did it subconsciously. The problem was, when I returned home, I had to re-train myself to do it quietly!

Speaker 4 It's that awful, monotonous whining, just when I'm settling down on my sun lounger for a doze in the sunshine. I mean, my neighbour's retired so he can do it any time of the day during the week. So why does he have to wait until my day off? I've tried drowning it out by playing loud music through my massive headphones – the ones I use to drown out the noise on the train when I'm commuting to work. But it's the pitch – it just cuts through everything. And he does it in his garage which just amplifies the sound, making it even louder! I have no idea what he's making. I just wish I had the guts to tell him how much it gets on my nerves but he's such a nice guy – I wouldn't want to hurt his feelings.

Speaker 5 I absolutely love the sound. It reminds me of crisp autumn nights in my home town in northern Canada. It's an important tradition there as it allows people to get together and socialize outdoors before the winter comes. You know, chat, eat together, and tell stories ... After that, it's often much too cold to go outside. My friends and I used to like getting it set up, you know, finding dry wood and putting it in a huge pile. I loved to listen to the crackling and popping as the wood burned and the flames danced orange against the darkness. And then later, when it had died down, we would put potatoes wrapped in foil into the hot ashes to cook. Food always tastes better outside in the fresh air, doesn't it? It was just magical!

Listening 2

- Interviewer** So, Ray, you've had a lot of important acting roles. Something I want to ask you about is how you prepare for them. I've heard you practise method acting. How does that work?
- Ray** Erm, method acting is when you immerse yourself so much in a film role that you actually almost become the character you're playing.
- Interviewer** That sounds like a lot of effort.
- Ray** Oh, absolutely! Even the most talented actors have to put in a phenomenal amount of effort in order to perform at their best. The ultimate goal is to convince people that you're actually that person. You want the cinema-goers to sense that you're actually real ... not just some guy trying for another Oscar ...
- Interviewer** And I guess achieving that sense of reality is a long and complex process, isn't it?
- Ray** Oh yeah, and that process starts with careful research. So, for example, I play a lot of historical roles.
- Interviewer** I can imagine it's very challenging.
- Ray** Uh-huh, because you have no real frame of reference. I mean, I can imagine what it might be like to be a modern-day character in the US, because ... well ... obviously I'm from the US and I have a lot of background knowledge to put that character into context.
- Interviewer** Of course.
- Ray** But when I prepare to play a historical character, I have to rely on research. I find out as much as I can about the cultural, social, and political context of the era the film is set in, and then I have to consider things like that character's family background, personal relationships, and any significant events in their lives up to that point which might have an effect on their personality and behaviour. I also research the language of the time. For example, they might

speak a specific dialect or have a strong regional accent. All these clues add up to me building a picture of that character in my mind.

Interviewer And then you practise being that person, don't you?

Ray Yes, and not just part-time either. Once I'm 'in character' that's me. I eat, drink, talk, and move like that character. I just 'am' that person for the duration of the filming.

Interviewer Wow, er ... how does your family feel about that, and your colleagues on set?

Ray Well, my wife struggled with it at first, but she eventually got used to it. She doesn't like it when I play a scary or unpleasant character – it kind of freaks her out a bit even though she knows I wouldn't hurt a fly in real life! I do get a few strange looks on set. I'm American but I've ordered sandwiches in a very strong Scottish accent before and had a few startled glances from the catering staff ...

Interviewer Not all actors do method acting, do they? I mean, is it really necessary?

Ray For me, yes. I guess the easiest way to explain it is, I'm very comfortable being 'me'. I don't have to think about how I move, talk, or respond to things – it's all subconscious. My aim is to become as comfortable playing the character as I am being me. I'm pretty stubborn too. Once I've decided what works for me, I tend to stick with it. I get a thrill from going into the details of the character. I adopt their facial expressions, their micro gestures – the things that eliminate 'me' and allow the character in the story to take over, to become a real, plausible person.

Interviewer Umm, I hear you've gone to some extremes with a couple of your roles. Can you give us a few examples?

Ray Well ... I've had to shave my head, grow a long beard, dye my hair all different colours in order to look like different characters. I've had to lose and gain weight, or work out lots to get in shape for a role. Sometimes I'd look in a mirror and not recognize myself ...

PROGRESS TEST FILES 6–10

Listening 1

- Speaker 1** I suspect that the number of people travelling abroad may continue to increase in future. Especially given the fact that we have access to information about so many interesting and unique places, cultures, and environments. Those opportunities are all out there now online – you can't keep an exciting location secret anymore ... I think the problem in future will be overcrowding. You might have the opportunity to visit these places but you'll do so with hundreds or even thousands of other tourists. The queues will be long and there'll be no space to just wander around and soak up the atmosphere – you'll have to remember that you're part of the crowd too!
- Speaker 2** After I left university, I travelled a lot. I guess my generation was one of the first to be able to do that. But you know, travel as an industry has increased so rapidly. The whole industry now is so huge, and its carbon footprint is massive. If we continue travelling for leisure, the environmental impact will be massive. I used to think my children would have the same opportunities as I had to travel and experience other cultures and environments, but I'm starting to doubt that now. Besides, both of my teenagers and many of their friends are environmental activists, so I get the impression they'll want to prioritize the environment over their own enjoyment.
- Speaker 3** In my country, an increasing number of families are choosing to stay at home rather than travel abroad during the holidays. One reason is the cost – travel companies always put up their prices during the high season, and with the economy less reliable of late, many people just can't afford to travel abroad anymore. There's also the question of reliability. Several major travel companies have gone bankrupt in recent years, leaving thousands of holidaymakers stranded abroad with no accommodation and extra costs to get home. People work hard, they want to recharge on holiday – the last thing they want is stress and disruption spoiling their experience. For this reason, I think the staycation will become increasingly popular.

Speaker 4 I think people are becoming much more aware generally of the impact that their actions are having on the planet. There seems to be a move towards environmentally friendly tourism and making sure you tread lightly on the land, and I think that this trend will continue to gain popularity in future. You know, staying in eco-houses or, errr ... glamping – you know, when you camp in a countryside location but not in a tent – something more substantial like a wooden hut. Lots of these businesses are starting up. A friend of mine stayed on an organic farm for a sort of working holiday recently. It's more about having an authentic experience than luxury these days, I think. At least, among the people I know it is ...

Speaker 5 This summer the police actually had to issue 'public awareness' messages on social media to warn tourists that there was no available accommodation left in some places – especially on the islands which are quite remote. People were travelling over on the ferries expecting to be able to find accommodation when they arrived, but then ending up having to sleep in their cars instead. It was having a negative effect on everyone's enjoyment of the area. I think there will be greater restrictions on tourist numbers in future. At the moment we don't have tourist tax or toll roads where you have to pay at a kiosk before travelling into a certain area, but I think it'll be necessary soon unfortunately.

Listening 2

- Adrian** Hello. I'm Adrian Bateman. In today's 'On the Ball' we'll be discussing the use of technology in sport. Joining me 'on the bench' is former athlete Johannes Bern ... So, Johannes, obviously technology is playing an increasing role in all areas of sport, and while many of its uses have been welcomed by sportspeople and fans alike, others have proved to be quite controversial ... perhaps most obviously the introduction of VAR – the Video Assisted Referee – in football. Johannes, let's start with VAR. It's a technology that everyone's heard about ... everyone's talking about at the moment ...
- Johannes** Sure ... I'm not convinced with VAR to be honest. In football, referees' decisions have always been debated, sometimes fiercely, but the idea that someone – a real person – has the final say has always been generally accepted. The presence of the referee has helped sports remain competitive but fair, and of course, helped ... in most cases ... to avoid conflict.
- Adrian** Uh-huh, but refereeing is a highly stressful job, especially these days when the financial rewards for winning matches are so high. VAR was developed in order to eliminate the possibility of human error, and allow the referee under pressure a bit of tech support, as it were. The players know now that if they commit an offence or break the rules, they're less likely to get away with it ...
- Johannes** I see what you mean, but I'm not sure I'd necessarily agree that it takes the pressure off the referee. Unfortunately, it could be argued that VAR actually leads to more conflict both on and off the football pitch, because players and fans argue amongst themselves, and with the referee, about the outcome of VAR – that's just counteractive. At the very least, it disrupts games, and that lack of flow and continuity can have a negative effect on players' performance and morale.
- Adrian** Absolutely, replaying an incident on VAR is time-consuming. That doesn't help – it just complicates things. I hear a full review is likely to take place, but as I understand it, there's currently no plan to scrap the system completely ... Anyway, moving on to another use of technology which hit the headlines in October 2019. That is, the use of lasers to assist an athlete to run a marathon in *under* two hours.
- Johannes** Mmm, incredible, isn't it?
- Adrian** It certainly is. Eliud Kipchoge became the world's first runner to complete a marathon in under 2 hours – 1 hour, 59 minutes, and 40.2 seconds, to be exact.

- Johannes** Wow, he had 20 seconds to spare!
- Adrian** Yes, it was an outstanding achievement, but arguably it was only possible due to the laser technology which projected a green line on the ground in front of him as he ran – effectively encouraging him to maintain a speed of, er ... I believe it was 13 miles per hour. He also had pace-makers, other athletes who ran beside him to motivate him. It was an incredible team effort, but because of this, his time isn't officially classed as a World Record. Do you think it should've been?
- Johannes** Mmm, that's a tricky question. I have immense respect for him, but I'm not so sure. Yes, he really did push his body to the limits but somehow it doesn't seem so legitimate if it was the technology that made the difference.
- Adrian** Yes, I think that's an opinion that many have expressed. It's traditional to view sporting success as a combination of physical power and mental strength. It's kind of hard to accept technology into that equation.
- Johannes** Umm, I think it's inevitable that new technologies in sport will initially be viewed with suspicion ... most sports have their roots in ancient history. They developed long, long before technology was available, so there's bound to be a period of adjustment ...