

ENGLISH FILE 4TH EDITION UPPER INTERMEDIATE AUDIO SCRIPTS

FILE TESTS

FILE TEST 1

Listening 1

1

Speaker 1 Well, my interview was in Manchester, an hour from my house by train. It was in the afternoon and there were plenty of trains, so I wasn't worried about getting there on time. What a mistake that was! When I got to the station to catch my train, there was a sign which said that all trains were cancelled because a tree had fallen across the track. There was a replacement bus service but it was much slower. There was no way I could've made it on time.

2

Speaker 2 To be honest, I didn't expect to be offered an interview, so I hadn't really thought about what I should wear. I mean, it was a trendy fashion company so I guessed I'd just go along in my newest outfit. Well, when I go to the interview venue – a posh hotel – I was shown to the waiting room. It was full of men and women dressed in very smart suits and holding briefcases. I was so embarrassed!

3

Speaker 3 It wasn't a difficult question really. I'd prepared really well but the atmosphere in the room was kind of intimidating. I mean, I hadn't expected there to be four interviewers! I guess nerves got the better of me. I was so keen to make a good impression, but when that first question came, I just froze – I couldn't say a thing! I just felt those four sets of eyes on me, waiting expectantly. It would've helped if I'd had a glass of water or something!

4

Speaker 4 I expected to be asked some tough questions at my university interview, so I had prepared really thoroughly. But when I got into the interview room, the guy looked at my application and said, 'So, it says you play the guitar in your spare time. Tell me about it.' Well, we had a sort of weird, informal chat for the rest of the interview and all the time I was thinking, why isn't he asking me any academic questions? I can't have got in! But I needn't have worried – I did get in!

5

Speaker 5 I'd never been to one of those corporate interviews before. I thought it'd just be a couple of business executives asking me questions, but I was shown to a room with several other people. We were told we were going to participate in several rounds of interview. The first was a 'group' interview where we all had to say why we were worth employing. People would be eliminated after each round. Well, I just got up and left. I mean, who'd want to work for a company that puts that much pressure on their employees?

Listening 2

Presenter So, in the studio we have Angela Hamilton, a professional psychologist. She's going to talk to us today about how our personalities are formed. Angela, welcome to the show.

Angela Hello Michael, thanks for inviting me.

Presenter So, Angela, as I understand it, the 'nature versus nurture' debate is one of the most controversial in psychology. What exactly is it all about?

Angela Well, ... 'nature' refers to our unique physical make up. You know, the genetic factors that we inherit from our parents which make us who we are – from our physical appearance to our personality characteristics.

Presenter OK, I get it ...

Angela And 'nurture' refers to the environmental factors that influence who we are. For example, how we were raised, our early childhood experiences, our social relationships, and our culture.

Presenter Uh huh, I see. So, what do *you* think, is it nature or nurture that makes us who we are?

Angela Mmm, well that's a difficult one to answer. You see, different branches of psychology have opposing theories, and despite decades of scientific studies, they just can't agree. Biological psychology claims that our personality is the result of genetic influences. On the other hand, behavioural psychology argues that environment has the biggest impact on our characters. I tend to agree more with the behavioural psychologists – that environment plays the biggest role in shaping our personalities. However, I recognise that genetics are involved too.

- Presenter** Okay, so it sounds pretty complicated. Can you give some examples of nature versus nurture?
- Angela** Of course. Let's think about academic success... when a person performs well academically, it could be due to nature – in other words that they are genetically programmed to be academic. Or, is it due to nurture – because of their environment? For example, because they had access to good resources – books, computers, encouragement from their parents, a successful brother or sister to compete with.
- Presenter** OK, so it's not so straightforward, is it?
- Angela** No, not at all. Many of our physical characteristics, such as eye, hair, and skin colour are definitely down to nature though.
- Presenter** So, how about personality? Can I blame my absent-mindedness on my parents?
- Angela** Unfortunately, it's not that simple. While eye colour is undoubtedly due to genes, things like height and life expectancy are programmed by nature, but also influenced by lifestyle and environmental factors. In my opinion, it's the same for personality. Scientists haven't yet found a specific gene for being easy-going or bad-tempered or well-behaved. However, you often find that people with those characteristics had parents or other family members with the same characteristics.
- Presenter** So, why do you often get siblings – brothers and sisters – who have grown up together in the same environment and been raised by the same people, with completely different personalities?
- Angela** Well, the thing is that we're all unique. Whether we grow up together and share the same parents or not, we'll all be different from each other. Throughout our lives we interact constantly with our environment – we change and adapt – every experience we have shapes our personalities and makes us what we are. And that uniqueness is a great thing. Nature or nurture? I don't think we need to debate because it's both ...
- Presenter** Angela, thank you. That was absolutely fascinating.
- Angela** Thank you, too.

FILE TEST 2

Listening 1

1

Speaker 1 Well, I'm really glad it happened on the last day of our holiday rather than the first! I'd had a great week of skiing and avoided injury. Then, would you believe it, I slipped on the steps as I was carrying my suitcase down to the airport bus. I couldn't walk – the pain was incredible. I was taken to the local medical centre and they bandaged my ankle and sent me to the airport by taxi. I was so embarrassed. When I returned home, everyone assumed I'd had a dramatic skiing accident!

2

Speaker 2 I've never known pain like it. I felt sick and dizzy ... and there was a loud noise which sounded like a helicopter was taking off right beside – almost inside – my head. I knew immediately that it was an infection and I needed antibiotics. I went to the doctor but I could hardly hear what he was saying. It took a day or two for the antibiotics to take effect. I had to take a lot of painkillers during that time, and I didn't get much sleep.

3

Speaker 3 I was on a long bike ride ... about 35 miles through the countryside. I had plenty of water, snacks, and a lightweight waterproof jacket. I thought I'd be fine as the weather was mild. But then as I was coming through the hills, the temperature dropped unexpectedly. Soon it was pouring with rain and I just got colder and colder. I started to feel really unwell but I knew I couldn't stop in the middle of nowhere. Finally, I came to a small village – I walked into a café and fainted.

4

Speaker 4 Seriously, I'll never eat food from there again. I'm so disappointed ... we've been going there for years and it's always been good food – really reliable. But then I've heard the chef has changed recently ... It tasted fine but I knew quite quickly that there was something wrong. You know, I started to feel kind of funny ... Well, within three hours we were all vomiting. We called them the next day to complain, and guess what? They offered us a free takeaway next time. Well, I won't be risking that again!

5

Speaker 5 Well, I had absolutely no idea I had a problem with them. I mean, I'd been stung before, and it really hurt, but it'd never been as bad as that. I was just sitting there, chatting with my friends, drinking coffee ... and eating cake. Then suddenly I felt a sharp sting on my throat. Instantly it started swelling up and I couldn't breathe – I fainted and woke up in hospital. I used to try and be calm around wasps, but I'll run away from them from now on.

Listening 2

So, most of you may know that this week is National Friendship Week ... so I've decided to talk about friends, and more specifically, to explore the concept of BFF or 'Best Friends Forever', which is kind of fashionable right now. But what does it actually mean? And is there too much pressure to have a best friend?

This is supposed to be a light-hearted talk but I think it's important to acknowledge the recent reports in the media related to loneliness. Research suggests that as a society, we're lonelier than we've ever been before. And while the traditional image of loneliness is that it only affects the elderly, the high rate of loneliness among young people is really quite shocking. This may not actually mean that young people have fewer friends – it's more about the pressure they feel to have 'successful friendships'. In fact, I recently read that over 80% of millennials reported that they felt like they had to live up to the expectations of others, and if they didn't, they would become socially isolated. That's pretty shocking really.

And I suppose that's where I come to the BFF question. Do we really need a best friend? And if so, do we need to prove it with a BFF hashtag? Whether we actually have a best friend, or a small group of close friends, or a wider circle of friends and acquaintances, we all feel alone at times – and nothing will ever change that.

So, there's something I have to admit – and I think I'm being pretty brave doing it – I don't have a best friend. This has not always been the case. At secondary school, I had a best friend called Charlotte. When we met in week one, we just clicked and we were together all the time after that – from then until fifth year. After school and at weekends I'd either be at

her house or she'd be at mine. If we weren't together for some reason, people would ask where the other one was. We wore similar clothes, and we liked the same bands and the same boys. But then one day she came to me in tears and told me she was leaving – her family was moving to a town far away. Well, I was so unhappy. And lonely. We'd tackled our teen years together and spent all our time together. How would I survive without her? When she was gone, I didn't really know how to be on my own, and I soon realized I hadn't really taken the time to get to know my classmates very well. They all had their own established friendship groups. After a couple of months, I gradually began to hang out with other kids and made a really nice group of friends, but I still felt there was something missing. Looking back now, I think it was the habit and security of having a BFF. Charlotte and I have kept in touch, and we still see each other every year or so, but we don't have a great deal in common as adults – just a lot of fun shared memories.

So, I don't have a best friend. Not because I can't find one, but because I no longer feel the need for a BFF. I have a mix of university friends, old flatmates, colleagues, and people I've met through various activities over the years. I like them all for different reasons and between them they cover every aspect of friendship: shared interests, emotional support and advice, quiet nights in, and wild nights out. None are the 'best' perhaps because I get what I need out of a combination of all my friendships.

Am I missing out on the whole 'best friends forever' phenomenon? Well, no, I don't think so. In fact, I think perhaps it would hold me back these days because I'd miss out on these wonderful diverse friendships I have now. Sure, I don't spend as much time with any of them as I'd do if I had just one BFF, but I don't think that matters. In fact, in a way, it makes life easier because I don't have to drop whatever I'm doing when my BFF calls. I can be myself and make my own decisions without having to discuss them with someone else.

The thing I've learned about friendships is that they change and develop as our lives do, and that's OK.

FILE TEST 3

Listening 1

1

Speaker 1 My friends and I are planning a trip around Europe at the moment so I've been busy researching the best destinations and finding out about cultural attractions and interesting activities we can do there. We're on a budget so I've borrowed this book from the library. It has lots of ideas for affordable travel and accommodation options. The only problem is, every destination in the book sounds amazing but we can't visit all of them!

2

Speaker 2 I just love a good crime novel. You know, a real page-turner; the kind you start reading and then you just can't put down! I've been known to eat breakfast and clean my teeth in the morning without putting a book down. Obviously, I have to work so I have to fit reading in somewhere! The one I'm reading now is a bit scary, I must admit, so I don't read it after dark!

3

Speaker 3 When I was young, my uncle lived in Japan. I was fascinated by his photos and stories when he visited. Anyway, for my twelfth birthday he gave me some 'manga'. It looked like a thick comic but it didn't have many words. Those it did have were written in Japanese kanji but I could follow the story from the dynamic comic-style pictures. I'm not sure you could call it reading but it stimulated the imagination in the same way.

4

Speaker 4 Well, at the moment I'm reading a very technical book about how to use my new laptop for work. I'm a graphic designer so I need to have some quite sophisticated software to create my artworks. I was used to using my old laptop but it was getting quite slow so I needed to upgrade. Wow, I never expected to have to read so many pages – it's going to take ages to get through it!

5

Speaker 5 To be honest, it's a while since I've read a physical book. I tend to do most of my reading online nowadays. I'm training to be a chef and I'm keen to open a small café business so I spend most of my time looking at recipes and videos. I'm really enjoying the community aspect too – you know, you can post a question and people will get back to you with ideas and advice. It's great!

Listening 2

Sarah My name's Sarah Jason and I'm here today to talk about how I became a writer. I guess I should start at the beginning ... talk about what inspired me and why I decided to go for it and write my first story. Well ... when I say 'my first story', I mean the first I wrote as Sarah Jason the author, because the first ever story I wrote was very, very long ago when I was a child. I can't remember learning to read. I feel like I've always done it. But my mother tells me that I read my first book aloud to her when I was just three years old. Back then we didn't have tablets or e-readers – just old-fashioned paper novels. And my room was absolutely stacked with them. Some days I used to come downstairs with two or three books and just sit and read them one after the other. On nice days, I'd go outside and swing on my swing whilst reading, or carry a book around the garden with me. In the winter, I remember once taking my sledge out into the snow and sitting in it ... reading. As I got older – about ten or eleven – my brother and I would make up adventure stories together. We'd discuss the characters and then draw them. After that we'd take turns to write paragraphs, or he would write the first half of the story and I'd write the second. I absolutely loved the thrill of it. And that's never changed. In fact, I still have a couple of those collaborative stories we wrote together.

Of course, I went on to study literature at university and I loved it. But after I graduated, I found I was in debt. I needed a job to pay off my student loan so I trained to be a teacher and began working in a secondary school. And although I quite enjoyed teaching, I missed being creative. I studied novels with the children in my classes but they weren't the kind of novels I wanted to read, and I had to teach the same ones repeatedly. So, I decided to try writing a short story or two. I didn't have a lot of free time but I realized that if I didn't do it then, I never would. So I'd just write a little each day – sometimes only a few lines. But it's not just the physical writing that makes you a writer. You have to use your imagination; you have to think and almost 'feel' the story. The characters and plot line develop over time. So ... I daydreamed a lot ... and I kept a notebook and pencil with me at all times. If I saw anything inspiring or interesting, I'd take notes. I'd listen in to conversations on buses and 'steal' a couple of lines of dialogue from them, or I'd see an interesting face in a crowd and imagine the character of that person – what their personality was like,

where they lived, what they were interested in. Then they'd become a character in my stories.

I wrote several short stories before I was brave enough to send one to a magazine to see if they would publish it. They rejected me ... and so did the next magazine, and the next. But I didn't give up. I read a lot, but I don't like everything I read. At first when I was rejected by publishing houses, I felt like I'd failed, but then I realized that everyone has different tastes in literature. If they don't like my story, maybe someone else will. After several months of rejections, I finally got a story published by a magazine in North America. I was so thrilled. And would you believe it? A publisher in the UK got in touch to ask if he could publish it too. The ridiculous thing is, his publishing house had actually rejected the story two months earlier. He didn't even realize!

So, that was the start of my career. I think a lot of people give up at the rejections stage, and that's understandable, but sad too as it could be a missed opportunity. I won a couple of short story competitions and then I started to feel like I was ready for my first novel. I took the brave move of giving up my teaching career and started writing full time. Well, when I say writing, you know what I mean. Some of the time I'm writing, the rest of the time I'm thinking of a good story!

FILE TEST 4

Listening 1

1

Speaker 1 I used to buy loads of clothing online, and if I didn't like them, I'd just return them and get a refund. But then I read an article online about shop returns – and how millions of returned clothing items are wasted because companies send them to landfill. They say it's just too time consuming to clean and resell them. Now I only buy from brands that make items from recycled fabrics and I never return them – I give them away, or sell them via social media.

2

Speaker 2 I'm really concerned about the effect of chemicals on the environment. I read recently that the average apple tree is sprayed with insect-killing chemicals thirteen times a year. Well, I don't like the idea of eating them now. And think of the effect of those chemicals on the environment. I've decided to buy organic food products from now on.

3

Speaker 3 Last year I decided to become a vegan – not eat or use any animal products – to reduce my carbon footprint. But things aren't always so straightforward. I've since discovered that many vegan products contain soya beans and that vast areas of rainforest worldwide are being cleared to grow it because of increased consumer demand. If this continues to happen, the rainforest will have disappeared by the time my grandchildren have grown up. Now I've decided just to eat healthily and buy local.

4

Speaker 4 I'm trying to be an environmentally responsible shopper but it isn't easy. Companies know that consumers are increasingly conscious of the impact of their shopping, and while many of them sell genuinely 'green' items, some try to 'greenwash' their image – you know, advertise their products in a way that makes them sound more environmentally-friendly than they actually are. I'd like to think that our shopping habits are going to continue to get more environmentally friendly in the future but this can only happen if businesses are honest about their environmental profile!

5

Speaker 5 I used to be OK about buying items in packaging because I thought it would all get recycled. Then I saw a TV documentary which revealed that a large

proportion of the plastic items we put in the recycling bin ends up being dumped in landfill or burned. Since I discovered that, I've been trying to buy items without packaging, and I always refuse to take free bags in shops. I've also joined some online campaigns which ask the food industry to reduce packaging and find more environmentally-friendly alternatives. Hopefully it'll make a difference ...

Listening 2

Presenter So, today as part of our Climate First series, I'm speaking to Mike Stephens, a climate scientist. As you know, a lot of the talk about climate change these days is pretty depressing, but there are some really positive things happening to tackle the issue, and that's what we'll be talking about today. Mike, thanks for coming in.

Mike Hello Isabelle, good to be here.

Presenter So, I'm really looking forward to hearing about some of these creative solutions ...

Mike Yes, as you say, climate change is a serious issue, but that's no reason to give up and do nothing about it. Of course, many human inventions have been harmful to the environment, so it's really important that we turn our attention to using our scientific knowledge to help reverse that damage.

Presenter Yes, we think we're really clever – and of course we are – but we can't go on creating products and systems that destroy our own planet, can we?

Mike Exactly. There's a lot of work to be done to reverse the damage. We need inventions that will protect the Earth, and ... hopefully ... help environments to heal and get better again. So, I'd like to talk you through just a few of the ones I think are really interesting.

Presenter Brilliant. Sounds interesting ...

Mike OK, so first on my list is drones that plant trees. We don't need to invent a machine to clean the air for us because we already have the natural equipment to do that for us – trees. Trees absorb the carbon from our fossil fuel emissions, they filter air and water, they return nutrients to the soil, and they provide essential food and habitats for wildlife. The problem is, right now, we're cutting them down faster than we can plant them. We're already planting trees by hand but man power alone can't match the rate of industrial deforestation. That's where the technology comes in – drones can fly into

areas that humans can't reach. BioCarbon Engineering, a UK-based company, aims to plant one billion trees per year using drones. First, they'll use mapping drones to research an area and determine the best planting strategy. Then, planting drones will fly six feet above the ground firing seeds into the soil. Now that's pretty clever.

Presenter Yes, it is! And what about our oceans? I mean, they're in a real mess right now, aren't they?

Mike Well, yes, but we may have a solution there too. If our plastic use continues, by 2050, the world will have twelve billion metric tons of plastic waste in landfills. That's a piece of plastic around the size of a car, for every human on the planet. But an accidental scientific discovery might change all that. You see, a team of researchers in Japan has discovered an enzyme that can break down plastic in a matter of days. Considering it currently takes hundreds, if not thousands, of years for plastic to break down, that's a massive improvement. It won't solve the problem alone though – we'd have to stop putting plastic in the sea altogether to do that. To effectively address climate change, we also need to change people's behaviour. We can't rely on technology alone to solve all our problems.

Presenter Mmm. And what about energy? Are there any clever solutions happening in that area?

Mike Yes, there are. We already have some effective solar panel technology, but of course it only works efficiently when the sun shines. As a wet weather option, scientists in China are looking at ways they can extract energy from raindrops.

Presenter Raindrops, really?

Mike Yes, it's a genius idea, isn't it? Another one is ...

FILE TEST 5

Listening 1

1

Speaker 1 It'd been such a terrifying experience. I mean, we hadn't expected to go so far, but we just must've taken a wrong turn. Soon we were completely lost and it was so hot. We realized we were walking around in circles so we stopped and tried to remember our survival skills. We made a shelter for shade and got a fire going to boil water from the stream nearby. The next day we just sat there waiting to be rescued. When the helicopter finally came, I just burst into tears.

2

Speaker 2 I knew it'd be a challenging route but I was determined to finish. I'd been preparing for months by then and was really fit. But that doesn't really make much difference to how tired you feel. I've run in a lot of mountains but these were so steep. Six hours running over rocks, down narrow paths, and through rivers and streams. It really was tough. Words can't express how tired I was as I stepped over the finish line.

3

Speaker 3 I would never have imagined Jean as an adrenaline seeker. I mean, she doesn't seem like the risk-taking type at all. I didn't think she'd ever do something like that! When she made the announcement at work, I nearly fell off my chair. Skydiving! No-one could speak at first – we were absolutely shocked. I have to say, I really admire her for it! I wish I was brave enough. Maybe next time I'll join her ...

4

Speaker 4 We'd set our hearts on buying that house. It was perfect for us in every way. The space, the garden, the lifestyle it would provide. We had the money too and could just imagine ourselves living there. We'd planned where we'd put the furniture and everything. But when we rang the agent to make the offer, he said the owners had decided not to sell after all. Words can't describe how we felt.

5

Speaker 5 It happened at my friend Tanya's 40th birthday party. Anyway, her husband James had organized a surprise party for her at the village hall, and the guests had been asked to arrive early. Well, I was standing near the door

when Tanya arrived. I was about to rush forward to give her a hug when another Tanya walked through the door. I couldn't believe my eyes – she'd never told me she had an identical twin! I was utterly confused all evening. I couldn't work out who was who ...

Listening 2

Jed Hello everyone, I'm Jed. Thank you for coming along to my talk this evening. I'm sure some of you may already have experience in how to stay safe outdoors when you're doing adventure sports or exploring wilder areas. Anyway ... whatever your level of expertise, I hope that you'll go home with some useful hints and tips for surviving in the wild.

It's important to point out that no two 'lost in the wilderness' scenarios are the same. Medical issues, allergies, phobias, and anxieties can all determine how being lost will affect an individual's ability to survive in their own unique set of circumstances. So, know your strengths and your weaknesses and plan ahead. Most importantly, don't plan an outdoor activity unless you're suitably experienced. It might sound a bit unkind, but if you choose to go out into wild places without the relevant skills, you could be a risk to yourself and others.

So, make sure you learn as much as possible about the landscape you're planning to explore. And always tell someone where you're going and what your plan is. That way if you don't come back, they'll know there's a problem.

Next, pack a survival kit. Most survival stories begin with 'I wasn't planning to go that far ...'. Whether you're going out for a day's walk in the mountains, or a week-long camping trip in the woods, always carry a survival kit with you. It can be small but it must have the essentials such as dry clothing, a knife, a survival blanket, and a medical kit.

I think most people will be aware that their main threats to survival are hypothermia and dehydration. Always take a lightweight but warm jacket. Even in summer the weather can change, leaving you exposed and cold. Nights can get chilly regardless of daytime temperatures.

Water that looks clean can contain bacteria or parasites which will make you sick if you drink it. But you can only survive three days without water so don't go thirsty – drink lots BUT make it safe by boiling it. And that leads me on to the next essential ... Don't, whatever you do, forget to take a lighter. The ability to light and maintain fire, especially in difficult weather conditions, is essential. It'll dry your clothes and keep you warm, boil water, cook food, and signal your location to rescue teams. And perhaps most important of all, it gives you that psychological boost you need to get through the darkest hours. So, I can't stress this enough – you may have done a course in natural fire lighting, but in a survival situation your priority is to stay alive so use the quickest option available.

So ... we've covered skills and equipment, but having these things doesn't guarantee your survival. Mental attitude has as much to do with it as anything else. What would you do if you found yourself lost? Well, most importantly, don't panic. Stop, sit down, and look around. Many people get desperate when they discover they're lost. Survivors will often say things like 'I wish I hadn't walked off in a random direction hoping to find the right path again. I ended up making the situation ten times worse.' So, try to stay calm and consider your basic needs: shelter, water, food, and protection. Save your energy – you don't have to start acting a hero in an adventure movie; only perform the tasks that are absolutely necessary for your survival. Remember, if you told someone your plan, the rescuers will be looking for you ...

FILE TEST 6

Listening 1

1

Speaker 1 I was so excited when I became a student and moved into my first rented flat. I really enjoyed living with my flatmates and cooking for myself, but the one big problem I had was the bed. It was so uncomfortable. I just couldn't get used to it. I finally gave up and started sleeping on the floor. It was much more comfortable!

2

Speaker 2 When I moved to the city, I had a terrible time with loud traffic outside. I just couldn't get used to it, especially at night time. I would lie awake for hours. But then a friend suggested I play some gentle music at bedtime to reduce the effect of the noise from outside. Thankfully it worked. If it hadn't, I think I would've moved somewhere quieter.

3

Speaker 3 The worst time I've ever had trying to sleep was when I was on a gap year in Australia. You know those noisy Australian birds that have a really loud call – the kookaburras? Well, they start communicating with each other early – I mean really early – about 5 o'clock in the morning! And my apartment was next to a park. There was a tree just outside my bedroom window, and I'd be woken up by those noisy things every day. No matter what I did, I couldn't block out the sound.

4

Speaker 4 I'd never had a problem sleeping until I moved to Canada. I knew the daylight hours in summer are much longer up north, but what I hadn't realized is that there's virtually no darkness at all! The first year I ended up getting what the locals call 'summer fever'. I had so much energy, and I just didn't feel like I needed any sleep. I started to go a bit crazy ... but now I'm used to it!

5

Speaker 5 My weirdest experience with sleep was when I went to New Zealand. You know, the time difference is huge in comparison to the UK so I expected to feel the effects – but I hadn't realized how much. That first night I'd fallen asleep almost immediately because I was so tired from travelling. I thought I'd sleep for hours, but in the middle of the night I woke up suddenly, and I was wide awake. Later that day I fell asleep during lunch.

Listening 2

- Presenter** So, our regular listeners will know that this month we're looking at sleep and how it influences our health. In the studio this morning we have Professor Anja Bern, a sleep expert. Now, Anja, you've been researching the effect of sleep patterns on teenagers. What have you and your team discovered?
- Anja** Well, I must begin by saying I feel very sorry for teenagers. In societies worldwide, they are being criticized for staying up late, and then lying in bed in the morning, refusing to get up. They're called lazy and unresponsive. And I think that's totally unfair.
- Presenter** Well, yes, but I have two teenagers and I have to admit, their bedtime habits aren't very good. I mean, they don't even seem to try and fall asleep before midnight. How can they expect to get up early for school in the morning if they don't sleep for long enough?
- Anja** Well, that's a very common argument, but it is based on a misunderstanding. You see, science has proven that there is a genuine biological reason why teenagers can't get up early. Or indeed, fall asleep early.
- Presenter** I see. Could you tell us a bit about your research, please?
- Anja** So, our research has shown that teenagers' body clocks are set differently – they actually have a different sense of time from children or adults. We all have a 24-hour cycle that determines when we sleep and when we're awake, but in teenagers this gets later, reaching its latest point by the age of around twenty years old. Then, after the age of twenty, our sleeping and waking times gradually get earlier again.
- Presenter** Really? That's very interesting ...
- Anja** Yes ... biological time determines when you feel sleepy. It's different from social time, which is determined by clocks and schedules – society's expectations.
- Presenter** So, how does that affect teenagers?
- Anja** Well, when there is a difference between biological time and social time, people can become sleep deprived. So, for example, the official early morning start times for school and university classes are usually between 7:30am and 8:30am. These are just too early for teenagers and young adults, whose body clocks are set to a later schedule. This really is having a negative impact on our young people.

Presenter Yes, I see what you mean. I know both of my children struggle to get up in the morning. I can see how difficult it is for them, and that's why I've felt so frustrated when they haven't tried to go to bed earlier. Now I understand ...

Anja Yes. Unfortunately, many teenagers are losing two or three hours of sleep per night during the week because of having to get up for school. You know, people talk about 'sleeping in' at the weekend to 'catch up' on sleep. That actually doesn't happen at all. Once you've missed those valuable hours of sleep, you can't get them back again – and this is a real risk to teenagers' health. Our research shows that young people who don't get enough sleep are more likely to become overweight and suffer from depression. They often perform badly at school and take less exercise. This is so unfair as it isn't their fault – they're already disadvantaged by lack of sleep.

Presenter So, what can be done about this?

Anja We have published a report which recommends that classes for teenagers and young people should always start after 8:30am at the earliest. But we would suggest a 10am start for younger high school pupils to guarantee improved health benefits. And an even later start – 11am or even 12pm – for older teenagers, aged 18 to 20.

Presenter That sounds like good advice.

Anja Yes, it's a start, but we need to see society change too. School staff and parents need to be more understanding. Instead of criticizing young people about their sleep habits and school performance, they need to let them sleep and wake later to match their biological clocks. The result will be that we raise healthier, smarter, happier teens. And that's what we all want, isn't it?

FILE TEST 7

Listening 1

1

Speaker 1 Look at those kids fishing. Do you remember that time when we went fishing? I think we must've been about eight or nine years old. It was raining really heavily but we were determined to catch a fish. Mum and Dad were really enthusiastic at first, but eventually they ended up sitting in the car. We were there for four hours and the only thing we caught was colds!

2

Speaker 2 Well, I've learned over the years that my mother-in-law – much as I love her – can be a bit argumentative. And we have very different views when it comes to politics. Anyway, I've been in a few heated discussions with her in the past and they never end well. So now, if she mentions her opinion on anything, I politely change the subject.

3

Speaker 3 It's really important that you don't walk along George Hill Road. You know, it seems like a quiet country lane, but the cars do come along it really fast – and there's no real pavement so it really isn't safe for pedestrians. If you need to go into town, I'd rather you take the bus. I'll give you the bus fare so you don't have to take it out of your pocket money.

4

Speaker 4 I can't believe it! I worked really hard on that essay and then that new professor read it. She called me in to her office this morning and asked me who had written it! I said I had but she didn't believe me. She said it was too good and I must've copied it from somewhere. I'm so offended – I'd never copy anything! I'm going to complain to the director of studies!

5

Speaker 5 So, we finally got into town, and it was busy ... and really hot. After about twenty minutes of driving around, I eventually found a parking space. I knew we were running late, but not so late that we'd miss the appointment. But then, would you believe it, my daughter just would not get out of the car. You know how stubborn three-year-olds can be ...

Listening 2

- Presenter** So, I have with me in the studio today, Elina Petrova. Now, Elina is a social historian and she's here today to tell us a little bit about her new TV series which is starting later this week. Elina, welcome to the studio.
- Elina** Thank you for inviting me, Ross.
- Presenter** So, Elina, you've made a TV series about people's beliefs and superstitions about the body throughout history ...
- Elina** Yes, that's right. I've always been fascinated by this. We all seem to be obsessed with appearances, but this isn't just a modern phenomenon. It's not just created by social media or advertising. Throughout history, people have had beliefs and superstitions about appearance ... and how that relates to our characters, and also to our future prospects. Each episode in the series will focus on a different aspect of appearance.
- Presenter** It sounds interesting. I know you won't want to give away too many secrets about the series, but can you give us a few examples?
- Elina** Of course.
- Presenter** Mmm ... perhaps you could start with me. I mean, I have red hair. What does that say about me, and my character?
- Elina** Oh, great idea! Let's start with hair ... so, red hair is traditionally associated with a fiery temper.
- Presenter** Yes, I've heard that.
- Elina** Yes, did you know that both Cleopatra and Queen Elizabeth had red hair? Many people have said this was the reason they were such strong characters. The Scots especially, valued red hair. It was seen as a sign of great strength and determination. We talk more about that in one of the episodes.
- Presenter** OK, I'd like to see that. Are there any other interesting ideas related to hair?
- Elina** Well, yes, lots actually. Perhaps it's not surprising that long hair suggested physical strength. And some people used to say that if a man had hair growing on his forehead, he would have a long life.
- Presenter** Mmm, I'm not too sure about that one. My grandfather is completely bald and he's 98!
- Elina** OK, I'm not claiming all these sayings are true! But one superstition I think most people still go along with is 'never pull out a grey hair'. Apparently, if you do, ten more will grow in its place.
- Presenter** OK, I won't be doing that with mine then ...

- Elina** Yes, and there's an old wives' tale I've read which says you can't trust a man whose eyebrows meet in the middle – it's a sign that he's dishonest.
- Presenter** Oh dear. That sounds like my brother-in-law!
- Elina** Well, you can't identify a criminal based on appearance – at least not anymore – but trained criminal psychologists are supposed to be able to spot a liar by studying the movements of their eyes. Historically, the eyes are the source of many interesting sayings and stories because they are supposed to be 'the window to the soul'. You know, they reveal so much about a person. Of course, you'll have heard stories about the 'evil eye'. You may have seen the eye-shaped symbols that several cultures use outside their houses to protect them against evil.
- Presenter** Yes, I've seen those in Portugal. Are there any body superstitions from other countries you can tell us about?
- Elina** Well, I'm from Russia and we have quite a few of them. The first is if your cheeks are burning – you know, like you're embarrassed. If only the right cheek is burning, it means your loved one or a close friend is thinking of you.
- Presenter** And if your left cheek is burning ...?
- Elina** Enemies are gossiping about you!
- Presenter** Ah, yes. We have a similar saying in English, but we say 'my ears are burning'.
- Elina** Yes, I've heard it! Another Russian saying relates to body language. In Russia you must not whistle in the house. In the past, people believed that evil spirits communicated by whistling, so if you whistled you would call them into the house, and that would bring lots of bad luck!
- Presenter** Mmm, that's an interesting one.
- Elina** Yes, and another interesting one is from Belgium. Apparently, if you sneeze during a conversation, it proves you are telling the truth!
- Presenter** Well, these beliefs certainly are fascinating. I can't wait to watch the show and hear more about this.
- Elina** Yes, thank you. As I said, today was just a sample of what we discuss in the programme. You can learn more about the historical details in the TV series...

FILE TEST 8

Listening 1

1

Speaker 1 Mr Boardman had been the main suspect in the police's investigations for several years. However, when it came to the trial, the jury decided that there was not enough evidence to prove that he had committed the crime. As a result, he has been released and this morning walked away from the court as a free man.

2

Speaker 2 Early this morning, a member of the public contacted the police to say that she had seen a man acting suspiciously in the car parking area behind the bank. Police acted immediately. They surrounded the bank and caught the robber as he emerged. The man has now been taken to police headquarters for questioning.

3

Speaker 3 According to the judge, although it was the young woman's first offence, the crime was serious enough to earn some time in prison. He ordered a three-year sentence but with the option for early release for good behaviour.

4

Speaker 4 Police had long suspected that Mr Anderson was involved but they had never managed to provide enough evidence to prove he was guilty. However, the evidence this time was clear – his fingerprints were found at the scene and a search revealed that he had hidden the stolen car in his girlfriend's garage.

5

Speaker 5 There has been an increase in the number of crimes of this nature recently. Local police have warned that any damage to property, whether it belongs to individuals or the public authorities, will be thoroughly investigated and those responsible will be brought to justice. They hope that tough action will put an end to antisocial behaviour in the area.

Listening 2

Mia I'm studying film and TV this term and I've decided to look into why certain genres are gaining popularity. In particular, television crime dramas. You know, the kind where you watch one episode and then you can't wait to see the next, and the next ...

Everywhere you turn these days, it seems like there's a new – and hugely successful – crime series available for streaming. Which raises the question: why are we all so obsessed with crime? I mean, most of us would never consider committing a crime, but we love watching it on TV. I did a bit of research, and this is what the experts have to say about it.

So, according to psychologists, our fascination with crime is ... well ... normal. I'd like to take this opportunity to reassure you – there's nothing weird about enjoying a good crime drama. Apparently, our interest in crime has a number of healthy psychological purposes. Humans are designed to pay attention to risk and danger so that we can avoid them. It's a basic survival skill. Watching TV crime gives us the experience of controlled fear. We can 'experience' risky or distressing situations from a distance. Furthermore, by watching these programmes we might gain some knowledge about the psychology of criminals that we could use to protect ourselves and our families.

Another normal but slightly disturbing idea is that evil actually fascinates us. For thousands of years, people have gathered around the fire to share stories, and these stories almost always involve good versus evil. Think about it ... even as kids, we're drawn to the tension between good and evil. We all had those comic books where the goodies fought the baddies, and we played 'cops and robbers' games where the police would try to catch the criminals. This fascination continues into adulthood. We love those stories that thrill and excite our imaginations, especially where the dynamic forces of good and evil are involved. In fact, one psychologist I read about compared crime dramas for adults to monster movies for children. And I guess that's true. They are actually pretty much the same as 'fairy tales' for grown-ups. The goodies always win in the end ...

And then there's the intellectual side of crime. People like puzzles, and crime stories offer us that intellectual challenge. We just love to play the armchair detective. You know, sit on our sofas and try to work out 'whodunnit' before the police authorities catch the criminal. We want to see all the details of that genius bank robbery plan, and

see if the robbers can get away with the money without being caught. We want to solve the crimes, figure out what drove these people to their extreme acts, because we'd never dare to do them ourselves. Do the police have enough evidence to charge them? Will they be sentenced or acquitted? How will the jury reach a verdict? That's tremendously addictive TV ... you know, we get that rush of adrenaline associated with real risk but without any serious consequences. And studies have shown that the effect of watching crime dramas on human emotions is similar to that of riding on roller coasters or practising extreme sports. It activates powerful survival instincts.

So, I've spoken about the thrill of the story, but according to psychologists sometimes it's the reassuring familiarity that people seek in a crime drama. Of course, crime stories may be different from each other but they tend to share a very similar narrative. By the end of a typical crime story, we've managed to identify who the good guys and the bad guys are, and the crime is solved. This familiar pattern proves to us over and over again that our criminal justice system – imperfect though it may be – basically works. That's reassuring to know.

FILE TEST 9

Listening 1

1

Speaker 1 I'm really disappointed. I bought this shampoo because I thought it was environmentally friendly. I mean, look at this label ... it says 'made with 98% organic products'. But then I looked at the other ingredients. It's full of nasty chemicals just like all the other brands! Next time, I'll read the small print on the label before I buy something.

2

Speaker 2 I know loads of people who dislike getting adverts that target them as individuals through their smartphones, but I don't mind at all. I absolutely love shopping, and targeted adverts help me find the products that I want. I don't mind companies collecting cookies and data about me if it helps me with my shopping habit!

3

Speaker 3 Aargh! I'm really trying to get on with writing this article and I keep getting these adverts coming up on my screen all the time. Have you any idea how I can turn them off? They're driving me crazy!

4

Speaker 4 I've always said that I've never been influenced by advertising, but I must be on an unconscious level. I'm pretty sure I can remember just about every type of sweet or fizzy drink advert from when I was young. We didn't have many ads on TV then and there was no social media – it was the clever use of words and phrases that sold products back then.

5

Speaker 5 You know that new environmentally friendly toilet paper I've been buying? Well, I'm really frustrated because I keep trying to buy more and it's always 'out of stock'. I guess that's what happens when you buy a product you've seen an advert for online. These ads spread so rapidly on social media – then everyone ends up buying the same thing!

Listening 2

- Presenter** So, today I'm speaking to Jan Holmen, a scientist who is currently researching 'living buildings'. Jan, thanks for coming in today.
- Jan** Thank you, Lena.
- Presenter** So, what type of architecture projects are scientists working on at the moment, Jan?
- Jan** Well, many new and exciting ideas have already been developed, but here's a new one you may find surprising. What if our homes were alive? I don't mean that they will be filled with smart technology that you can talk to. I mean actually alive in the sense that they will have the ability to grow and repair themselves.
- Presenter** Erm. That sounds a bit weird to me.
- Jan** Yes, I agree. The concept might seem a bit spooky and sci-fi at first. However, we face major challenges such as over-population, lack of resources, and climate change, so we need to think seriously about the way we live, and how we build our man-made environment. We have some really state-of-the-art smart cities already, and we also have some great projects which aim to make buildings greener by planting trees and gardens on balconies and rooftops. The next step is to actually combine architecture and building technologies more closely with nature.
- Presenter** Yes, that sounds like an important step.
- Jan** It is. Let me give you some examples of how we think the buildings of the future might come alive. First of all, we have buildings that grow.
- Presenter** Grow?
- Jan** Yes. We already use natural materials such as wood and stone for building, but the Earth has many more resources that could be used. For example, we've already discovered a way to use mushroom roots, or mycelium, to create useful materials.
- Presenter** I heard about that. I think someone made a dress, didn't they?
- Jan** Yes, that's right. Mycelium can be thin and lightweight like fabric, or thick and strong to make large objects. At the moment, anything that is made from mycelium is heated up to make sure it doesn't grow and change. The next challenge for scientists is to see if products made from natural materials could be kept alive and made to grow in a way that we could control.
- Presenter** That sounds incredible ...

Jan And then there's buildings that heal. Most buildings in cities are made from concrete. If a crack appears in concrete, water gets in and begins to destroy the building. This is a particular concern for the future as meteorologists have predicted more extreme weather and flooding.

Presenter That's a good point.

Jan Mmm, but the good news is that researchers in the Netherlands have discovered a way to make concrete that can heal itself. The special ingredient is a type of natural bacteria that is found near volcanoes. This incredible type of bacteria can survive in extreme hot or cold temperatures. When it is mixed into concrete, it remains dormant and can survive for two hundred years. However – and here's the magic part – if the concrete cracks and water gets in, the bacteria become active and 'grows', fixing any holes in the concrete at the same time.

Presenter That's amazing! I guess it could save a lot of money on building repairs.

Jan Oh yes, the research team predicts that using this special concrete recipe might add decades to the life of a building. That's billions of pounds worth of savings.

Presenter Well, I must say, it all sounds so positive, but are there any disadvantages to living buildings?

Jan Well, yes, the disadvantage is that they will, of course, eventually die. And although this is a disadvantage, it's not as bad as it sounds. You see, the buildings we have now also have a life span, and when they come to the end of it, it is expensive and polluting to knock them down. Instead, imagine a city with a life cycle where buildings return to the Earth without having a negative effect on their environment. Isn't that truly inspiring?

FILE TEST 10

Listening 1

1

Speaker 1 When I arrived at the conference centre, a security guard asked, 'Are you here to give the presentation?' I said yes, so he led me along a corridor to a large door. He said, 'Just go in, they're ready.' Well, I'd been expecting a small audience of 20 to 30 people but when I stepped through the door, I found myself in a huge theatre with an audience of at least 120! When I started my speech, they all looked bewildered – they had been expecting a presentation on health, not climate change! I was definitely in the wrong place ...

2

Speaker 2 I'd been preparing for weeks and I was really ready to give that speech. So, finally, the moment came. I walked onto the stage and started speaking. But suddenly there was this incredibly loud noise – I realized the fire alarm was going off. Well, that was it, we all had to go and stand outside until they'd checked the building to make sure it was safe. I got to finish the speech later but my enthusiasm for it had vanished.

3

Speaker 3 Well, I'm a professional speaker now, and I think I'm pretty good at what I do. But when I started out, I did get a little nervous. My presentation coach watched my first official speech and gave me feedback. She told me the content of my speech was fine but if I didn't stand still, I'd make my audience dizzy!

4

Speaker 4 Before I started my talk, the host had given me a glass of water. The whole time I was speaking I was worrying about accidentally knocking it over. I couldn't concentrate on what I was saying. So, I decided the best thing to do was just drink all the water to empty the glass. Well, what a mistake! I started coughing uncontrollably. It was so embarrassing!

5

Speaker 5 I'd prepared really well, and my slides ... well ... they were amazing! I had all sorts of clever graphs and tables of statistics to share with my audience. But I shouldn't have relied on them so much. The projector stopped working and I had to do the presentation without them. I was really disappointed ...

Listening 2

Chris Hello everyone, I'm Chris. Before we start, I'd just like to make it clear ... this isn't a comedy show. Yes, I am a comedian but I'm not here to tell jokes tonight. I'm here to give you, the audience, some hints and tips on how you could take that first step into comedy too.

So ... to be honest, before I became a comedian, I never really saw myself as particularly amusing – I still don't actually. But I've always loved talking and being with other people and ... I guess along the way I must've cracked a few jokes because I somehow earned myself the 'funny' label. As a student, I'd be at a party and someone would say to me, 'Tell them the one about ...' Then one evening, not long after I'd graduated from university, I was in a bar with some friends and it turned out this bar was hosting a comedy 'open mic' night. You know, when anyone can go up on stage for a few minutes and tell a funny story or try out some comedy in front of an audience. Well, a few people had taken turns to perform and I was quite enjoying the entertainment of it all. And then my friends started encouraging me to go up on stage and 'tell some jokes'. Well, I was pretty surprised to say the least but I thought, why not? I walked up onto the stage and told what I considered at the time to be my best joke. I only really expected to amuse my friends but to my utter disbelief, the rest of the audience started laughing. I told a couple more jokes and before I knew it, my five minutes were up. Afterwards, the host came up on stage and said, 'That was your first time? You could make a living doing this!' He invited me back to do a longer comedy performance, and for some crazy reason, I said yes ...

I have to admit, the next time I was really, really nervous. I mean, I've never particularly had a fear of public speaking but comedy's different. At least if you're giving a speech, you can prepare and rehearse thoroughly so you don't forget what you're saying. But with comedy, there's that added uncertainty. You might know your material well but will the audience actually find it funny? Well, I survived the show and now, as you know, I'm a stand-up comedian. Not quite what my parents expected when they paid me through medical school but ... Anyway, here are a few tips to get you started if you're considering a career in stand-up.

First, go to open mics and live shows. The comedy on TV gives us all a false impression that it'll all go well. You know, they miss the bit where the comedian tells a joke and no-one laughs. At live comedy, you'll see people going up on stage one after the other. Sometimes it goes well, and sometimes it doesn't. The important thing is to witness the failures and successes of others and think to yourself, 'I can do that too ... even if it means making a few mistakes along the way!' It'll give you the self-confidence you need to have a go yourself.

Second, prepare your jokes. Test your material on your closest friends and ask them to be honest if they don't find it funny. If they care about you, they won't want you to fail in front of an audience. Also, you don't know for sure how you'll react speaking in front of a room of strangers. To avoid freezing up, it's best to have material ready – there's no shame in taking a notebook with you.

Most importantly, it's OK to feel afraid. I know several comedians who still have a phobia of public speaking. They tell me that the fear is worse when they're waiting to go onstage. It tends to go away once they're in front of the audience.

Of course, at the end of the day, none of the tips or tricks I tell you will guarantee 100% success. What's most important is to give it a try, and if it doesn't work out the first time, try again, over and over again until it does. You see ...