

# Listening

## 1 A))

**Speaker 1** Speaking from my own personal situation, I love the fact that I have a brother. Um, it provided, he provided me with a lot of fun when, when we were growing up um, and um and having, having two kids myself I am very pleased that they, they've got each other to look after. And, er, I think as you go through life and your own parents get older, um and you know, you will one day have to look after them, I think doing that with a, with a sibling would be a lot easier.

**Speaker 2** I'm an only child, and someone said to me, 'Oh that must be so much better to be an only child because you get all your parents' attention and you don't have to share it with your brothers and sisters,' and to an extent I kind of agree because um, you, it is wonderful to have all that attention from your parents. But, you can end up becoming, sort of spoilt and um used to having this attention, so when you have to go to school or you have to interact with other people, if you don't get the attention that you've been used to, you can react in a, in a really spoilt way without, sort of, meaning to.

**Speaker 3** I've got two children and although they fight all the time and they, you know, all this sort of thing, there's, I think, I often, well when they are fighting, try and look at the positives of it and think, well, I suppose it's a good thing that they are sort of, you know, learning to do all those things within a safe family environment, which I suppose if you are, I mean, if you are an only child, perhaps then it has to be at school or, you know, it's like practising.

**Speaker 4** I'd hate to have been an only child, I mean I had three brothers and sisters, and I think only, there was, the girl next door was an only child and she was under so much pressure from her parents to succeed and all their hopes were focused on this one girl ... I thought, I wouldn't want all that pressure on me.

## 1 B))

**1** Well, one job I've always rather fancied is being a travel writer, I mean, basically because I like travelling and I like going round the world and I'd like to have an excuse to do it and someone to pay me to do it if possible, um, and I think I would be quite good at it because, well, I am quite sociable and I like to think I can write and er, and I'm quite good at living out of a suitcase and living cheap, um and it just seems to be a wonderful way of seeing the world. I mean, I don't actually know anybody who does it, but I've always sort of envied people like Michael Palin who do these television series going all round the world and they seem to have such a wonderful time.

But I have occasionally had to read travel books and some of them are brilliant and some you definitely get the impression that they've been sent there by their publisher to do a travel book about Patagonia or whatever it is and nothing much has happened, but they've still got to write the book. So you get rather a boring drudgy book sometimes, and I suppose that might be a drawback that you'd feel you had to write a book even if you'd got nothing to say.

**2** Well, what I'd really hate to do is any sort of job on a production line, any sort of real drudgery where there's really no, sort of, mental input at all, but you're just repeating the same task again and again and again and I think that would probably drive me insane.

I have done something a bit like it when I was about 18, I worked in a plastics factory to earn some money for a couple of months and I remember I went in, in the dark and I came out in the dark, because it was winter, so I never saw the light of day, it was about a ten-hour day, paid almost nothing, we had half an hour for lunch and the noise of the machines was so loud that you could, you could shout at the top of your voice and the person next to you couldn't hear you, and the smell of plastics filled the air and it was absolutely hideous. The only, the only advantage was that it was so loud that you could actually sing at the top of your voice and nobody could hear, so I spent a lot of my day singing to myself, which, which I quite enjoyed.

## 2 A))

**Interviewer** Do you find it easier to understand native or non-native speakers of English?

**Zoltan** It depends what you mean. As far as pronunciation goes, it's a lot easier to understand native speakers with a standard accent like BBC English or General American. And for me, some of the regional dialects are quite easy to understand as well. Um, other dialects are a lot harder to decipher, like Scots, or Geordie, or New Zealand are really hard to understand. As far as content is concerned, it's a lot easier to understand non-native speakers. Because they don't use idiomatic expressions or obscure cultural references; they don't use regional slang. They also use the Latin, er, verb instead of a phrasal verb, for example like 'continue' rather than 'carry on', which is less easy to confuse. And the other thing about non-native speakers is that they are a lot more direct. When they speak in English, they say what they mean. There are no... allusions and metaphors and references to other things.

**Interviewer** How do you feel about having your English corrected?

**Zoltan** I don't mind. Er, I'm sometimes annoyed with myself for making a recurring mistake again like mixing up 'he' and 'she' and I find it a bit weird when a non-native speaker who is less fluent than me corrects my English. And ... I also think that non-native speakers, good non-native speakers, are often better at spelling than native speakers, because we learn words with their spelling whereas native speakers learn the word first and learn the spelling years later. And just recently an English friend of mine corrected my spelling of 'accommodation', which I'd spelt with double 'c' and double 'm', and he insisted that it was spelled with a single 'm' and in fact I was right.

**Interviewer** Do you have any funny or embarrassing stories related to misunderstanding someone?

**Zoltan** Hungarians aren't generally interested in bird watching, and most Hungarians I know can't tell one bird from another. And recently a friend of mine told me about seeing some kites

over, over the fields near their house the previous weekend. And I said that flying kites is really popular in Budapest too, meaning that people go in to the hills at the weekend to fly their home-made paper kites. It never occurred to me for a second that she may be talking about a bird. I don't think a Hungarian would ever tell someone else about seeing some bird several days before.

**Interviewer** Is there anything you still find difficult about English?

**Zoltan** Not really. I've been learning English for 26 years. If I had to say anything, I would say counting, numbers. If I have to count anything, I have to switch back to Hungarian, even if the person I'm speaking to will need the English sum.

**Interviewer** Do you find it easier to understand native or non-native speakers of English?

**Cristina** Well, it all depends where they come from. I suppose it's more or less the same. Some non-natives are more difficult than others if you're not used to the accent. For instance, I used to find some Japanese and Chinese speakers difficult to understand, but then because of work I went to the Far East lots of times and then it became OK. Natives, again it all depends. I was taught RP and one assumes that everybody speaks that, and of course I had friends from lots of parts of Britain who did not speak RP. In fact, it is a pretty rare thing these days. So we have a good friend from, from Glasgow and it was always embarrassing for me because I could not understand most of what he was saying. I still don't.

**Interviewer** How do you feel about having your English corrected?

**Cristina** I don't mind. My children used to love correcting me. They still say I speak very funny English, but usually adults in this country do not correct you. I would like to be corrected.

**Interviewer** Do you have any funny or embarrassing stories related to misunderstanding someone?

**Cristina** Um yes, misunderstanding and being misunderstood. Several! Some I don't think I would like to tell you about, but I'll tell you one. I was a student at the University of Michigan in the United States and my phonetics professor was very handsome and therefore I did extremely well, not in all subjects, but it was worth studying that one. But I remember my first tutorial when he said 'See you later' and I thought, 'Hmm, interesting. Where?' And in class he'd said, I'd asked a question and

he'd said, 'Interesting question' so I thought, 'Great! He thinks I'm clever, and maybe he thinks I'm interesting to meet somewhere else, but I couldn't understand how I was going to find out where or when. I luckily didn't ask. It would have been very embarrassing.

**Interviewer** Is there anything you still find difficult about English?

**Cristina** Yes, I think there are things that have especially to do with cultural aspects. I used to find when my children were little that I didn't know the same nursery rhymes that you know here. I didn't know the actions, and I still don't know lots of things. It's, I don't know to give an example, say I had learnt American English, but I still didn't know who the Simpsons were.

## 2 B))

**Speaker 1** My earliest memory is from when I was about three years old and I was at home with my mum and I was playing with my red plastic Hoover, which I really liked as a toy when I was little. Um, it might have seemed a bit dull but I really enjoyed playing with it.

**Speaker 2** My earliest memory is of, er, living in Malta when I was young and looking out of the window to see, um, the grapevine and the veranda outside my bedroom window having been destroyed by a whirlwind that had just gone through the, gone through the garden of the house. It hadn't touched the house itself just taken out the veranda and the grapevine.

**Speaker 3** My earliest memory is my first day of school when I was about five because I was really nervous and I forgot to tell the other people my name so people were kind of confused.

**Speaker 4** My earliest memory is probably at the local airport, but um I've got a feeling that it's a memory of looking at a photograph of myself in a basket at the local airport. So it's a bit hard to distinguish whether that's a real memory or a perceived one.

**Speaker 5** Um, my earliest memory is walking on a beach with my family collecting shells. I somehow remember finding a piece of blue glass which had been worn smooth by the waves. When I showed it to my mum, she told me to keep it because it was such a pretty colour.

## 3 A))

**Speaker 1** My best friend kept insisting that I met up with a cute, single male friend of hers. Finally, I gave in and went on a date. My friend was right: he really was cute and single. But he was totally obsessed with my friend – all he did was talk about her. I finally made an excuse to go home early after he asked me if I thought my friend was happy with her boyfriend!

**Speaker 2** I was on my first date with this beautiful young lady, and we went to a nice restaurant. The waitress was bringing our drinks to us when one of the other waitresses asked her a question. And as she turned around, she tipped our drinks all over me – I mean, I was drenched from head to toe. Other than that, though, the date went really well. We got married after six months and well, now, fifteen years later, we still laugh about our first date.

**Speaker 3** This is one of my more memorable dates, but for quite the wrong reason. What we did was this: he took me for a loooooong drive in his truck – I had absolutely no idea where we were. Then he stopped at a gas station and bought me an ice cream. And then he drove me back home again. That was it. As you can imagine, I didn't bother to find out what would happen the second time round.

**Speaker 4** My most memorable first date was at a fast food restaurant! I'd been trying to get together with this girl for weeks, but our schedules just didn't coincide. So, when I was going out for a burger one evening, I just texted her and asked her to come. And amazingly, she did! And we ended up talking about everything from work to family. We've been together for eight months now, and she often pulls my leg about it.

**Speaker 5** When my current boyfriend asked me out, we went out for dinner and then back to my place for coffee. And at some point he got down on his knees, you know, like he was going to propose, or something – and he got me really worried. Then he got a ring pull out of his pocket – you know, the ones that come off the top of a drinks can – and he said, 'Will you be my girlfriend?' And after that, we couldn't stop laughing.

**3 B))**

**Speaker 1** Erm, as far as historical films go, my personal favourite is *Elizabeth*. Um, as the title suggests, it's about one of the most famous queens of England, Elizabeth I, who ruled the country in the second half of the sixteenth century. The plot is based on the early years of her reign, when she is on the lookout for a suitable husband. Cate Blanchett plays the role of Elizabeth, and she looks wonderful in the flowing gowns typical of that era. In fact, all the actors look the part, because of the great attention paid to what each of the characters is wearing.

**Speaker 2** I think my favourite historical film is Ben Affleck's thriller *Argo*. The film tells the story of the rescue of six American diplomats in Iran when relations between the two countries were starting to break down in the late 1970s. Erm, it's got to be one of the most exciting films I've ever seen – I spent the whole time sitting on the edge of my seat. Some of the events may be a bit exaggerated, but it's a true story all the same.

**Speaker 3** Erm, my favourite historical film has got to be *The Last Emperor*. It's based on the autobiography of the last emperor of China, Puyi, who died in 1967. Puyi grew up in the Forbidden City in Beijing, and the film's director, Bernardo Bertolucci, was lucky enough – he got permission to film inside this amazing palace in Beijing. I mean, visually, the film is absolutely stunning, so it's not surprising that it won nine Oscars.

**Speaker 4** Erm, I thoroughly enjoyed the historical film *Invictus* when it came out. Um, it's about the events that occurred in South Africa before and during the Rugby World Cup in 1995, I think. And there are two great actors in it: Morgan Freeman, he plays Nelson Mandela, the President of South Africa at the time, and Matt Damon. He plays the captain of the rugby team. They're both brilliant in the parts. I like it because at first they're hostile to each other and then they become friends. That's why I like the film.

**Speaker 5** This film isn't particularly well-known, er, but it's definitely my favourite historical film. It's a drama called *Agora*, and it's based on the life of a Greek philosopher called Hypatia, who lived in Roman Egypt in the fourth century. Hypatia was also a mathematician and an astronomer and she taught at a school in Alexandria. Hypatia is admired by many, including myself, for giving her life trying to protect the library of Alexandria when it was attacked.

**4 A))**

Our composer of the week this week is Aberdeen-born percussionist, Dame Evelyn Glennie. She studied at the Royal Academy of Music. In a career spanning more than 20 years, she has performed with almost all of the world's leading orchestras, playing up to 60 different percussion instruments, from the xylophone to the timpani. In that time, she has won over 80 international music awards, including two Grammys. Outside classical music, she has achieved crossover success in the worlds of pop and rock, having recorded with artists such as Sting and Björk as well as composing and performing a number of soundtracks for film and television.

Glennie began studying music at the age of 12, by which time she was profoundly deaf. However, she has never been deterred by her loss of hearing and doesn't see it as an obstacle to composing and performing music. In fact, she is frustrated by the fact that despite all her achievements as a musician, it's her deafness that always makes the headlines. As she writes on her website in her essay about hearing, 'If you are standing by the road and a large truck goes by you, do you hear or feel the vibration? The answer is both. For some reason we tend to make a distinction between hearing a sound and feeling a vibration, in reality they are the same thing.' She goes on to point out that this distinction doesn't exist in all languages. For example, in Italian, the verb 'sentire' means 'to hear' while the same verb in the reflexive form means 'to feel'.

In concert and in the studio, Glennie performs barefoot in order to feel the sounds of her instruments vibrating through the floor, and the title of her best-selling autobiography is *Good Vibrations*. But let's get on to the music. Glennie released her first album in...

**4 B))**

**Presenter** If you're a regular cinema-goer, you may have noticed the long list of films that have been shown recently which are based on books. Yet it can't be easy to turn literature into cinema successfully. Today, we're going to take a look at the subject of film adaptations and we've invited film buff Lindsey Wallace into the studio to share her views with us. Hello, Lindsey.

**Lindsey** Hi there.

**Presenter** Lindsey, what is it that makes a good film adaptation?

**Lindsey** Basically, it's finding the right

balance between telling the original story while at the same time adding something new to it. If there are too many changes to the plot, the fans will get upset, but if the film is too faithful to the original, they'll go away wondering why they bothered to see it in the first place.

**Presenter** Are you suggesting that the film adaptation doesn't have to be 100% faithful to the book?

**Lindsey** It isn't really a question of being faithful to the book; it's more a question of capturing the spirit of the original story. A good screenplay writer is one who understands the material and is able to pick out the themes, characters and scenes that are most important. After that, it's a question of timing – deciding how much or how little emphasis to place on each of these things.

**Presenter** Hmm. Apart from the balance and the timing, is there anything else that contributes to a good film adaptation?

**Lindsey** Well, once you've got the screenplay right, you obviously have to find the right actors for all the different roles. Casting is fundamental when it comes to film adaptations, as readers will already have an idea in their minds of what the characters are like.

**Presenter** Lindsey, now that we've established what makes a good film adaptation, can you give us an example?

**Lindsey** Um, actually, I can give you more: the three films that make up *The Lord of the Rings* series. All of them have an exceptional cast including renowned actors such as Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Liv Tyler, and Cate Blanchett. And the makers have been faithful to the J.R.R. Tolkien novels; at times parts of the original narrative are read over the images that appear on the screen. At the same time, the timing is impeccable as the film focuses on what is truly important in the story. But the key to the film's success is Peter Jackson's use of special effects, some of which had never been seen in the cinema before.

**Presenter** What kind of special effects?

**Lindsey** Take, for example, the character of Gollum, a creature created almost entirely by computer-generated images. You believe he's really there next to the real actors on the screen.

**Presenter** That's very true. How about giving us an example of a bad film adaptation, Lindsey?

**Lindsey** Again, I'm going to give you another film series: *The Hunger Games*. The films are hugely popular and have won several different awards. I think the casting is certainly excellent, and

Jennifer Lawrence is superb as the central character, Katniss Everdeen. But I feel that the filmmakers have been a bit too faithful to the books. Each film tells the story in the exact order that it happens in the original, which, to me, makes the plot seem a bit flat. There is little use of timing, so the key scenes aren't given enough emphasis. On top of this, I don't think there's really anything new for the readers – even the colour and flamboyance of the Capitol comes as no surprise as it is depicted just as it is in the book, which I found a bit disappointing.

**Presenter** That's a shame because all three of the books were excellent.

Lindsey Wallace, thank you for joining us today.

**Lindsey** My pleasure.

### 5A))

**Presenter** Time flies, as the saying goes, and it's quite true. Gone are the lazy days of childhood when the summer holidays seemed to crawl by – once you become an adult, the weeks pass by in a whirl of activity. An American neuroscientist has recently published a paper exploring this phenomenon. Our science expert, Stephen, is here with us to explain the theory. Stephen, why does time seem to go so slowly when we're children and so fast when we grow up?

**Stephen** First of all, it's important to understand how we perceive time. Essentially, our brains take in a whole lot of information from our senses and organize it in a way that makes sense to us before we ever perceive it. When we receive lots of new information, it takes our brains a while to process it all. The longer this processing takes, the longer that period of time feels. Conversely, if your brain doesn't have to process lots of new information, time seems to go much faster.

**Presenter** Well how does that explain why our perception of time changes as we get older?

**Stephen** When we're younger, most of the information we receive is brand new – and there's lots of it. The new information takes longer to process, which is why time seems to pass more slowly. Whereas when we are older, the world is much more familiar to us, so there is less new information to process. It doesn't take long to process anything that's new, which explains why time seems to pass more quickly.

**Presenter** Uh-uh. Stephen, is there anything we can do to slow time down?

**Stephen** The good news is that there is, yes. The first thing you can do is to keep learning. If you're constantly reading, trying new activities or taking courses to learn new skills, you'll be feeding your brain with loads of new information that will make time pass more slowly.

**Presenter** Hmm. That sounds easy. What else?

**Stephen** The second thing you can do is to visit new places. A new environment can send a mass of information rushing to your brain: smells, sounds, people, colours, textures. Your brain has to interpret all of this, which will give it plenty of work to do.

**Presenter** I suppose meeting new people might help as well?

**Stephen** That's right. Meeting new people is a good workout for our brains because it takes a lot of time and effort to process and understand details about them.

**Presenter** Hmm. Is there anything else we can do, Stephen?

**Stephen** Yes, being spontaneous can help a lot. Surprises are like new activities: they make us pay attention and heighten our senses.

**Presenter** Well, so, now you know. All you have to do if you want to slow down time is to follow Stephen's advice. Stephen Carter, thank you for joining us.

**Stephen** My pleasure.

### 5B))

**Presenter** Hello and welcome to the show. Today we're looking at different ways of saving money, and we're asking you, the listeners, to phone in with any ideas you've experimented with. The number you need to call is 081 272 272 and the lines are already open. And it looks as if we have a caller on line 1. Can you tell us your name, please?

**Caller 1** Yes, I'm Mary.

**Presenter** Hello, Mary. What's your money-saving idea, please?

**Caller 1** Well, when I noticed that my energy bill kept creeping up and up, I decided to turn down the thermostat on my heating. Instead of having it at 21°, I've put it down to 18°, and it's made a big difference. I pay about fifty pounds less on my heating bill than I did before, and if I feel a bit cold, I put an extra jumper on.

**Presenter** That sounds like a great idea, Mary. Most of us have our heating on too high, so it makes sense to turn it down to pay less – and save energy at the same time. OK, thanks Mary. There's another caller on line 2 – Philip, is that right?

**Caller 2** Yes, it is.

**Presenter** What do you do to save money, Philip?

**Caller 2** Um, I always take a packed lunch to work. We've got a small kitchen on my floor with a microwave, so we can bring our food in a plastic box and heat it up. I usually take what's left from dinner the night before, but if there isn't anything hot, I make a salad. It's certainly a lot cheaper than having to pay for a meal every day.

**Presenter** Thanks for that, Philip. Yeah, taking a packed lunch is an excellent way of saving money when you need to have lunch at work. OK, our next caller is Emily. How do you try to save money, Emily?

**Caller 3** Um, yes, um, a couple of years ago, I decided to start putting all my change in a coin jar at the end of the day. I've got one of those big sweet jars, so it takes quite a long time to fill it up. It's my way of saving up to go away in the summer – I wouldn't be able to afford it, otherwise.

**Presenter** Those sweet jars are great for saving money in, aren't they, Emily? OK, back to line 2 for our next caller. What's your name, please?

**Caller 4** Jonathan.

**Presenter** Jonathan, tell us your money-saving idea.

**Caller 4** Well, it might sound a bit radical, but I cut up all of my credit cards last year. Now, I only use cash. Paying in cash really makes you think about how much you're spending – if you use a credit card, you tend to lose control, to some extent. It's worked for me, anyway, and I've cut my spending by about 20%.

**Presenter** Jonathan, that's certainly the bravest solution we've had so far. OK, we've just got time for one more call, Wendy on line 1. What's your money-saving idea?

**Caller 5** Um, it might sound a bit weird, but I've found that it's a really bad idea to go shopping on an empty stomach. When I'm hungry, I end up buying loads of snacks on impulse – it's such a waste of money. So now I do my shopping straight after I've had a meal and I don't spend half as much.

**Presenter** That makes sense, Wendy, thank you for calling. Well, I hope that the rest of our listeners have found those ideas useful. And now it's time for the news...

**6 A))**

I found Matt Cutts' TED talk extremely encouraging, so much so that it motivated me to think up some activities for you all to try. Here are just a few of them.

Summer is just around the corner, so let's start with things you can do outside. First of all, there's running. There's an app you can get that helps you build up to running five kilometres. It only takes half an hour of your day, three days a week, so make the most of those longer days, get out of the office or gym, and try a run in the park.

If you don't fancy running, you could try walking to work for a month. If that isn't possible, you could walk to public transport or get up early every day and walk around the block. Walking is a great way to start the day and you'll soon discover that fresh air is your friend.

Apart from physical activity, summer is a great time to look at what you eat. Why not have a go at making a new salad every day? It's possible to make at least 30 different salads, and there are some marvellous recipes out there. This challenge has the added bonus of being a health kick as well.

So much for the summer months; what about when it starts to cool off and you have to stay indoors? One thing you could do is start a book club. When I last moved house, I left a brilliant book club behind and immediately missed the witty and jovial conversations I used to have with the other members. So I started a book club of my own in my new neighbourhood. If you love reading, and you're not in a book club, get it sorted immediately.

If you prefer writing to reading, you could start your own blog. Pick something you're really passionate about and start blogging about it. It's fun, free, and takes up hours of your time – literally, hours.

Another activity for the winter months is to learn a new language. There's another app that provides a fun, game-like way to learn languages such as French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, Turkish, Hungarian, Polish, or Romanian – for free.

These are just a few ideas for you to try, but the possibilities are endless. All you need to do is pick an activity and get started. I'm sure you won't regret it!

**6 B))**

**Speaker 1** What's the question? Do I have any obsessions? Well, I don't consider them obsessions, but I do have a habit of organizing myself in ways that other people might consider obsessive. I've walked into a friend's flat where I was staying for a week or two, and instantly alphabetized their collection of CDs or DVDs of maybe a hundred or so because if I was going to be there, and I needed to find a piece of music, it just means... it was a lot easier to find it when it's alphabetized.

**Speaker 2** Yeah, this started sometime last year. I was surfing to discover something about my youngest child's skin problem, when I found this amazing parenting website. Soon I found I couldn't go a day without logging on. Um, I started spending all evening 'chatting' to my new online friends instead of spending time with my kids and my husband. It never crossed my mind that it could be addictive, but now I feel edgy and tense if I can't access my computer.

**Speaker 3** Well, I do. I've got a complete obsession about cleaning, and it's awful, it's the bane of my life, it's absolutely awful, I cannot relax unless everything is absolutely, you know, um, clean and tidy. I've had to let it go a bit because my husband's an Aussie and he's very laid-back and I just haven't been allowed to be as obsessed as I have been in the past, and of course having children stops the obsession a little bit because there's toys and stuff everywhere...

**Speaker 4** My addiction has got me into a lot of trouble, actually. I've always loved spending money, and I guess I never realized that it could get out of hand. Coming home with armfuls of clothes gave me an enormous high and I needed to keep on buying more clothes, shoes, and accessories to keep getting it. I would go in my lunch hour, after work and at weekends, but I couldn't see that I had a problem until my boyfriend, James, split up with me. On top of that, I'm about £30,000 in debt now.

**Speaker 5** There's a name for this condition, but I can't remember what it is and I'm not sure what it's called but I do count things. If I come into a room, I will count the number of lights on the ceiling. The only thing is, I don't know how many there really are, because I count things so that they turn out to be in multiples of threes or nines, and I also count panes in windows, I will count panels in doors. But I like them always to get up to a 3 or a 30 or a 90, um, so it's a fairly useless thing, but it's just something I just do.

**7 A))**

**Interviewer** Anna, the school you attended was quite different from a conventional school, wasn't it?

**Anna** Yes, it was. I went to a Steiner School.

**Interviewer** Hmm. Can you briefly explain to us what that is?

**Anna** Yes, it's a school that follows the theory of Rudolf Steiner, an Austrian philosopher. The idea is that school should help a child develop the tools to be able to learn what he or she wants to rather than having knowledge delivered to them. Steiner schools have been around for about a hundred years now.

**Interviewer** Hmm, very interesting. Now, how long were you at the Steiner School, Anna?

**Anna** I did the lot there – from four to 18. I went all the way from kindergarten to 'A' levels. I got an 'A' level in art – um, you know, the Steiner system is heavily focused on creativity and the arts. In general, the question of exams is a bit of a grey area in Steiner Schools, because, well, they don't really fit into the whole philosophy of it at all.

**Interviewer** Yes, I'd heard that. Um, where exactly was the school you went to, Anna?

**Anna** Er, it was about 15 miles from my house. My dad used to take us there in his big, red delivery van. There were about ten of us and he would drive round picking everybody up. This was in the days before health and safety; none of us wore seatbelts. In fact, there weren't any seats in the back of the van, so everybody just piled in and sat on the floor. Oh, the school run was a lot of fun – we had a party every morning.

**Interviewer** Yes. What about when you got to school?

**Anna** Um, kindergarten was great. All the toys were made of natural materials; we had lots of lovely wooden toys. And we did lots of fun activities like singing and baking. But that doesn't mean that we were left to wander around freely. It's, it's quite a structured approach, and everything is done for a reason.

**Interviewer** What about after kindergarten – what were the classes like then?

**Anna** Um, the ones I remember most are the art classes, because I loved them. Um, by art, I don't just mean painting and drawing. We did things like woodwork and metalwork and lots of crafty stuff like sewing and, er, weaving. No other school would have offered me the same opportunities as I had there, and it totally set me up to do what I do now.

**Interviewer** Which is...?

**Anna** I design and make furniture – it's all very hands-on. At university I studied ceramics: I did a BA in Cardiff and then an MA at the Royal College of Art, London. I use a lot of ceramics in my work, making ceramic lighting and that kind of thing. Actually, all of my peer group ended up doing something creative with their lives: some went into music and acting. That's the kind of thing a Steiner education prepares you for.

**Interviewer** Hmm, Anna, you have children of your own now. Are you planning on sending them to a Steiner School?

**Anna** Er...probably not, no, although it very much depends on them. The twins are only two months old, so I still don't know how their personalities will develop. If I see that one of them is artistic, or that one would benefit from smaller classes, then I might consider it, but in general, I'd rather my kids grew up in the real world.

**Interviewer** It sounds as if you have some regrets about your education, Anna.

**Anna** I'm not sure 'regrets' would be the right word, because a Steiner education wasn't the wrong thing for me. I loved it until I was about 12, when I began to realize that I was living in a kind of bubble and I started to rebel against that. I also wish I could have had more of an academic input in the later years – that would have opened a lot more doors for me.

**Interviewer** Anna, it's been really interesting talking to you. Thank you so much for your time.

**Anna** No problem.

## 7 B))

**Presenter** Hello and welcome to today's programme where we're looking at the works of Russian-born artist Vladimir Tretchikoff. Now, Tretchikoff's most famous painting *The Chinese Girl* was recently sold for almost £1 million at auction in London. Our art expert is in the studio with us to tell us about the woman who modelled for the picture, Monika Pon-su-san. Louise, was Monika a professional model?

**Louise** No, not at all. She was a young Chinese girl, working in her uncle's laundry in Cape Town, South Africa. She was only 17 at the time, and when she met Tretchikoff, she had never modelled before.

**Presenter** How did the two meet?

**Louise** Tretchikoff had heard of Monika's

beauty from a friend, and so he went to the laundry to see her himself. According to Monika, she was serving a customer when he came in, and while he was waiting he couldn't take his eyes off of her. Once they were alone, he introduced himself and asked if he could paint her.

**Presenter** That must have come as a surprise to Monika. Did she actually know who he was?

**Louise** Yes, she did, in fact. By chance, she had read about him in a newspaper the Saturday before, so she knew who he was.

**Presenter** Louise, let's talk about the painting itself. Is Monika wearing her own clothes?

**Louise** No. Apparently, Tretchikoff gave her one of his wife's silk gowns to put on. But the real gown wasn't yellow like the one in the painting; it was blue.

**Presenter** What about Monika's expression in the picture? Why is she looking so serious?

**Louise** Monika says that as Tretchikoff was painting her, she was thinking about the traumas he had experienced in his life. He was imprisoned several times during the war, and at one point he lost contact with his wife and his daughter.

**Presenter** Hmm. But the story has a happy ending, doesn't it, because his family was reunited in Cape Town.

**Louise** That's right. It was fortunate that they all ended up in the same place.

**Presenter** Louise, did Tretchikoff pay Monika for modelling for him?

**Louise** Yes, he did. He gave her just over six South African pounds. That's the equivalent of around 130 pounds today.

**Presenter** That doesn't seem much. Did she at least like the painting?

**Louise** No, she was shocked by the green face. She says she thought that she looked like a monster. And she didn't think much of the title, either: *The Chinese Girl*. She was expecting something a little more exotic.

**Presenter** And what happened to her afterwards? Did she ever model again?

**Louise** No, she never posed for another painting. She got married and went to Johannesburg, where she had five children before splitting up with her husband. After that, she had to go back to work to try and make ends meet, but the family never had much money.

**Presenter** In contrast to Tretchikoff, who went on to make a fortune. Louise, did Monika manage to attend the auction of the painting?

**Louise** No, she didn't; she missed it. She was incredibly disappointed about that,

but apparently she jumped up and down in excitement when she heard that the painting had fetched nearly a million pounds.

**Presenter** Yes, that price is hardly surprising when you consider that the painting is one of the most popular prints ever made. Louise, thank you for joining us today.

**Louise** You're welcome.

## 8 A))

**Presenter** Hello and welcome to the programme. Today, we're looking at extraordinary medical conditions, and our first story concerns a young American girl called Ashlyn Blocker. Janice, tell us a bit about Ashlyn.

**Janice** Ashlyn Blocker has an extremely rare condition which means that she doesn't feel pain. Now, you might think that this would be a good thing, but in fact it can result in serious injury – or even death. To give you an example, Ashlyn can't feel extreme temperatures. So if she drops a spoon in boiling water while she's cooking, she simply puts her hand in the water to retrieve the spoon. She doesn't realize that she has burned herself until she sees that her fingers are red and swollen. This kind of thing happens to her almost daily.

**Presenter** I see the problem. So when did Ashlyn's parents notice that something wasn't quite right?

**Janice** Well, erm, as a baby, Ashlyn hardly ever cried, which is most unusual, and then when she was six months old, she didn't seem to notice when she had a serious cut on her eye. At first, the specialist thought that she had no feeling in the eye, and so he sent her to hospital for tests. Eighteen months later, the doctors gave Ashlyn's parents their diagnosis: she had 'congenital insensitivity to pain'.

**Presenter** Wow. What did her parents do then?

**Janice** Well, they didn't know what to do, so they just did their best to keep Ashlyn safe. They got rid of all of their furniture with sharp corners and lay down the softest carpet they could find. At school, teachers watched her all the time. One person was assigned to make sure that she was OK in the playground, and the nurse always checked her over before she went back to class. But even then, accidents happened, er, such as the time she broke her ankle and ran around on it for two days before her parents noticed.

**Presenter** Oh, how awful! Janice, how common is Ashlyn's condition?

**Janice** When it was first diagnosed, the doctors said that Ashlyn was the only person they had ever encountered who had it. Because the condition was so rare, there was very little on the internet. So Ashlyn's parents decided to go public to see if they could find anyone else like their daughter. First, they contacted their local newspaper, then the story was published nationally. Their story appeared in magazines, er on the, on the internet, and Ashlyn was interviewed on TV. All the media attention finally put the family in touch with scientists who could help them understand what was happening to Ashlyn.

**Presenter** What is it that causes the condition?

**Janice** It's a genetic disorder. Normally when we touch something hot or sharp, the nerves on the skin send electric signals to the brain, causing us to react. But in Ashlyn's case, there is a mutation in one of her genes. This alteration prevents communication between the nerves and the brain and so the electric signals are never produced.

**Presenter** Ashlyn sounds like a remarkable young woman, Janice; thank you for sharing her story with us. And now let's move on to someone else with an extraordinary medical condition...

## 8 B))

Normally when it snows in Atlanta, the temperature hovers around freezing, and nothing much ever happens 'cos the snow falls, but then the temperature goes up and everything melts and that's the end of it. But this time – oh my word! I mean it started snowing at about noon and immediately, really quickly the temperature dropped to -4, which is very unusual. I was in my office, which is up on the 51st floor, and I was getting kind of worried and I looked out on the streets and saw that nothing and no one was moving in any direction. And I live in a suburb, in Marietta, about 25 miles from the office in downtown Atlanta. So anyway at 5.30 two people, two of my co-workers who live near me, told me to hurry up and ride with them, so off we went.

Eight hours later, we had literally gone three miles, just three miles, and all along the side of the freeway people had parked because they were either too tired to go any further, or they had run out of gas. Several times we actually moved out of our lane, only to find that what had stopped the car in front of us from moving was that the driver had fallen asleep at the wheel!

I honestly didn't think we'd ever get home. I mean if we'd only gone three miles in eight hours, we might not be home for three days!

Anyway as the night wore on, I saw more and more people walking along the side of the freeway, and some of them were in high heels and thin jackets, and by this time it was, gosh, about -9. I have no idea where they were going because they were miles from anywhere.

Around 5.30 in the morning, like 12 hours after we'd left, we made it to the top of a hill, and all the way up the hill there were cars slipping and sliding, and huge trucks parked four or five parallel with the drivers sleeping, and people parked who were out of gas. It was just a thin stream of cars that was able to make it to the top of the hill, somehow sort of managing to get around all the cars that were slipping and sliding and crashing into each other. So fortunately we made it through, but we were going incredibly slowly.

And then, to our absolute amazement, the traffic thinned out and we were able to move a bit quicker. But we still had a problem. We were able to move, but we were on a thick sheet of ice, so every vehicle on the road was a potential weapon to all the others. We all had to keep our fingers crossed and drive slowly and hope no one would hit us. This continued for about 12 miles, at which point we had to go up a long hill at our exit. We had learned that hills were what did everybody in, what made them either crash or give up, and at our exit there were wrecks and empty cars and trucks everywhere, but we made it through and turned onto the road which leads to my house. It was just weird, really spooky, driving along that road for four miles at 6.45 in the morning without seeing a car or a person in any direction. I told the people I was with to drop me off on the main road because where I live is very hilly and I knew if they tried to get near the house, they'd never get away, so they let me out. But all I had on my feet was a pair of flat shoes, and I fell over seven times in quick succession until I realized that if I wanted to stop falling, I would have to walk the mile to my house in the deeper snow, on the side of the road. So up and down all those hills in my thin flat shoes I trudged through the snow and when I got near our house, I had to sit and slide down the hill! That was the only way I could get down there. I tell you I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. So, finally I stumbled in the door just as the sun was coming up at 7.30 in the morning, so it had taken me 14 hours! It really was something I'll never forget as long as I live.

## 9 A))

**Speaker 1** Well, erm, we're both vegan, so I suppose that's a positive thing, cos we've got that in common. But I think Garfield definitely makes me less active than I used to be. He lives inside the house instead of outside in the garden, but, you know, I love having him around. Although he's quite big, he can still hop up onto the sofa, and aww, he likes to lie on my lap eating a carrot stick. Anyway, he usually ends up falling asleep, and he's so warm and soft, and aww, looking at him, I just don't want to disturb him, even when I've got things to do!

**Speaker 2** I've had Philphil since she was a kitten, and I suppose we have one thing in common: we both enjoy harassing my husband. Philphil bites my husband's toes and attacks him on my behalf, constantly bothering him when he's trying to do something. Well in that sense, she's exactly like me! And, erm, well she shares my sense of humour. We both like to snuggle up at night as well. I can get very cold at night, and Philphil sleeps on the bed to keep me warm.

**Speaker 3** People tell me that I'm eccentric, just like my pet, Molly. I suppose if enough people say it then it might be true. I'm sure I have picked up some of her traits, like the way I talk sometimes and bob my head, but erm I wouldn't say that I twittered. She does have several traits that I can see in myself, because Molly loves people, and at times she's a little bit of a show-off, just like me. And she's got a great sense of humour!

**Speaker 4** I've had Crosby for what? Er, about eight years now – he's quite a rare breed, a Dandie Dinmont terrier. Oh, and yes, I think we look alike, yes. We've also developed the same personality over the years: I'm becoming a bit more bad-tempered, I think, and so is he, although he doesn't often bark. We both like our own space, and neither of us is as tolerant as we used to be. When it comes to food, I enjoy mine as much as he does, although, it has to be said, I'm a bit fussier.

**Speaker 5** I keep reptiles, and I've noticed their personalities change to become more like mine. I've had bearded dragons calmly sitting and watching the telly when I do. If you've got lots of energy, they pick up on that, and if you're afraid, they are, too. They sort of tend to reflect whoever has brought them up. If they've had a stressed owner, for example, then they can be very stressed, they can behave like absolute lunatics, sometimes. But generally, because I'm calm, they tend to calm down themselves.

**9B))**

**Speaker 1** Just after I left drama school, I was cooking supper for my boyfriend and another bloke who we were working with in the theatre, and I was going to do spaghetti bolognese and I wanted some green peppers. And I didn't realize then that there was a difference between green peppers and green chilli peppers, and so I cooked the spaghetti bolognese and I couldn't quite understand why my, underneath my nails was burning so terribly, but I just kept washing my hands and ignored it. And then we sat down to eat and Jeff, the friend who'd come, took one mouthful of the spaghetti bolognese before either of us did and fell off his chair onto the floor. And I'm afraid the whole lot had to go into the bin, it was the most horrendous experience.

**Speaker 2** One particular one when I'd just bought a new oven, and I'd invited some friends round and I was going to cook a piece of roast meat, and I put it in my new oven, and turned it on and left it for an hour to cook. And when I opened the oven door, I realized that I'd put the grill on, not the oven, so that the top of the meat was completely charred, and underneath it was completely raw, so the meal was completely ruined. So I had to send out for a takeaway.

**Speaker 3** Well, it didn't really involve cooking as such, but it was certainly a bad preparing food experience. My family, we went to Italy, and everybody in my family enjoyed the antipasti, the bruschetta, so I thought when I came home that I would re-invent this, you know it's very simple, basically it's little bits of bread with lovely tomato sauce on top and garlic. And I'd asked an Italian waiter and my Italian isn't very good, so I thought that I'd interpreted well what he'd said. However, you're supposed to rub the garlic on the bread, the sort of slightly toasted bread, just a little on one side. However, I went mad and was rubbing for a minute on both sides of the bread, and I put the tomato sauce on and handed it to my family, and they all spat it out, it was inedible. I think we threw it away.

**10A))**

**Presenter** Hello and welcome to the show. There are many stories about immigrants coming to the UK and today we're going to look at some of the best. Our starting point is a novel by the Bangladeshi-born British writer Monica Ali. It's called *Brick Lane*, and here's Jenny Trench to tell us about it.

**Jenny** Hello there. *Brick Lane* tells the story of Nazneen, a Bangladeshi woman, who is sent to England at the age of 18 to enter into an arranged marriage. Her husband is Chanu, a middle-aged civil servant, who is also a Bangladeshi immigrant. Nazneen has been told that Chanu is a successful man, because this is how her father and his peers regard Bangladeshis who have left the country to make a new life for themselves abroad. But Chanu is not a success. He lives on a relatively poor housing estate in an area of London called Tower Hamlets and his apartment is not only full of ugly furniture, but is also in need of repair. Nazneen is confused by her new husband and her new surroundings, and to make things worse, she's forbidden from leaving the house. At first she accepts her fate and settles into the traditional role of wife and mother, while still an outsider in London.

**Presenter** Jenny, apart from Nazneen, tell us about the other characters in the story.

**Jenny** Well, I've already mentioned Chanu, Nazneen's husband. He is full of endless plans to become successful, but he's incapable of realizing any of them. At first, Nazneen has a positive aversion to him, but as time goes by, they gradually begin to accept one another. Then, there are the two daughters, Shanana and Bibi. Shanana battles constantly with her father, mainly because she prefers British culture, while Bibi longs for stability. Nazneen's sister Hasina appears often in the story in the many letters she sends, describing her troubled life back in Bangladesh. Hasina's fate is quite the opposite to Nazneen's as she eloped to make a love marriage and then ran away when her husband began beating her. Razia, Nazneen's unconventional friend, who shaves her head and wears European clothes, often visits Nazneen for a chat. And of course there is Karim, the good-looking young man who is Nazneen's lover for a time.

**Presenter** Of course. What did you like most about the story, Jenny?

**Jenny** The thing I liked most was the way we see Nazneen begin to take control of her life. Nazneen was taught from birth to accept her fate, and this is what she does on her arrival in England. As time passes, however, she begins to question the role of fate. One day, she leaves the house to explore the neighbourhood and comes across Brick Lane itself, a street which is the very heart of London's Bangladeshi community. As her daughters grow, she learns English from them, which allows her to function in the world outside her home. Her life opens up more when she starts taking in sewing to earn some extra money and she meets Karim. But *Brick Lane* is not a love story. It's about Nazneen's development as a person. In the closing pages, we find a much more confident Nazneen. We are aware that her troubles are not over, but we know that she's much better-equipped to cope with them than she was when she first arrived in London.

**Presenter** Thank you, Jenny Trench. So that was Monica Ali's novel, *Brick Lane*. And now on to our next book...

**10B))**

**Presenter** A question that many parents ask themselves is when they should introduce their children to a sport. If rugby coach Joseph Ting is to be believed, the answer is: as soon as possible. Two years ago, Ting and his colleague Luke Walden founded Rugby Munchkins, a rugby club for toddlers. Players can join from the tender age of two. This is what rugby dad Ollie Sampson has to say about his daughter's experience of the club.

**Dad** Chloë is three and nearing the end of her first season as a rugby player. She's always been quite a physical, outgoing kind of girl, and she loves her Sunday morning classes, charging around with a ball in her hands, though usually not in the direction the coaches want her to go. Tackling is what she likes best, and if you stand a large, stuffed, orange tackle bag in front of her, she'll bring it crashing to the ground. I think she could be a pretty good player if she sticks at it.

**Presenter** Believe it or not, the motto of the programme is 'gently introducing children to rugby'. We asked one of the coaches to tell us how this theory works in practice.



**Coach** With the youngest ones, we get them to run across the field with a ball. When they put the ball down everyone shouts 'try' and claps. As they get older, we introduce them to new games, like Hungry Munchkins. This is a game which teaches them speed, ball-handling, colour identification, and, perhaps the hardest lesson of all, to stand in line and wait for their turn. The children are in four teams: red, blue, green, and yellow. In the middle of the pitch, there is a pile of coloured balls. Players take it in turns to collect their team's coloured balls from the pile and bring them back to a basket. We play lots of games like this, and all of our games are educational as well as physical.

**Presenter** It has recently been reported that two-thirds of children would rather that sports were not competitive. So we asked how much emphasis Rugby Munchkins puts on success and failure.

**Coach** We aim to teach the children that you can keep score without it being everything. They all understand that the process of scoring a try gives their team points but we don't make a thing about winning. After a match, everyone gets a sticker, not just the winning team.

**Presenter** It'll be interesting to see how many of the current Munchkins are still playing in the future. You never know, one of them might make the national team, which will show that Ting and Walden's efforts have been worthwhile.