

PRACTICE TEST 1

LISTENING

Part 1

Example:

- M:** Mary and John should have come by now. I wonder what's keeping them?
W: It may seem as if they'll never get here, but they will. You know how Mary is when she's getting ready to go out.
M: I guess you're right. Besides, I can't think of one time they haven't been late.

1.
M: Do you have an extra memory stick? Mine's full.
W: Why don't you erase some of the stuff you have on it?
M: Because all the files I store there are too valuable to lose.

2.
W: Don't you think you paid too much for this car?
M: Are you kidding? For what I got it for? I think it was a good deal.
W: I still think you could've talked the guy who sold it to you down.

3.
M: Can I go on that trip to New York with my friends?
W: Not unless I know exactly who you'll be with.
M: But what if it's people you don't know?
W: Then make other plans!

4.
M: That was a really compelling film. I've never seen anything like it.
W: Yeah, I enjoyed the plot, too. But what I liked most of all was the soundtrack.
M: Hey, maybe we can download it.

5.
M: Can you lend me fifty dollars?
W: Hey! Where's the fifty I gave you last week?
M: Don't worry. I'll give you a hundred as soon as I get paid.
W: I'm fed up with giving you money all the time.

6.
W: I've explained why sales have fallen, but the board keeps on asking the same questions again and again!
M: Well, try to explain it to them one more time, only use more charts and statistics to illustrate your points better.
W: Yeah, maybe I'll try that.

7.
W: How did Mary react when she ran into you?
M: You shoulda seen the look on her face. I was the last person she expected to meet.

8.
M: We were all surprised when Bill came to work with his hair dyed red. He looked weird.
W: I wish I'd been there to see him. I didn't think he'd do it. He must've looked funny.
M: Funny is an understatement. I thought he looked hilarious.

9.
M: Jim is such a fantastic athlete.
W: So he is, but not compared to his younger brother, who's even better.

10.
W: So why'd you get fired?
M: All I'll say is that management thought it would please investors to let some of us go. Downsizing they call it. I hope they're happy now.
W: Well I call it a shame. And you were such a loyal employee!

11.
W: Why won't you take no for an answer?
M: Because I fail to understand your reasons for turning down my offer.

12.
M: Most scientists are really worried about global warming.
W: Granted, but there's a small number who don't share this view. I think there's even one or two who think the Earth's in great shape.

13.
W: What took you so long to get here?
M: I decided to walk home for a change. I guess I needed the exercise.

14.
M: What are your plans for Saturday afternoon 'cause I wanted to check out that new shopping mall.
W: Hey, that's not a bad idea. Come by to get me at about one.

15.
W: Why'd those policemen come here for John?
M: It wasn't him they were after. He was present during a robbery yesterday and they wanted him to tell them what he'd seen.
W: It looked as though he was being arrested.

Part 2

Example:

Have you heard the news about that new job I've been offered?

16. I was expecting an email message from you. Remember?
 17. Isn't the game over yet?
 18. Why didn't you give me a hand when I needed it?
 19. Did you leave any Coke for me, or did you drink it all?
 20. How about eating out tonight?
 21. Did everyone who was invited show up?
 22. Did anyone come by asking for me?
 23. Didja eat any sweets?
 24. What's the situation with Mary?
 25. How much did that set you back?
 26. Are you sure you've done this before?
 27. Can you help me figure this out?
 28. What sort of reviews has that new film been getting?
 29. Are you doing anything 'cause I was thinking about taking in a play.
 30. When do you think the report should be ready?
 31. How did your birthday party go?
 32. What's the fastest way to get to the airport?
 33. If I drive there, where will I be able to park?
 34. Don't you think that movie had a plot that was somewhat contrived?
 35. Can you leave your cell phone number with my secretary in case I need to contact you?

Part 3

SEGMENT 1

Announcer: Cars and factories are seen as the main culprits behind global warming. But reporter Mary Brown has filed a report on another source of greenhouse gases that has, until recently, avoided public attention.

Reporter: Greenhouse gas emissions come from the burning of fossil fuels. Emissions from motor vehicles and factories have been well documented, as have been those from agriculture. However, a significant source, which even the media have neglected, is gaining the attention of environmental groups. That source is ocean-going ships, of which there are hundreds of thousands, if we include fishing trawlers, private yachts, and unregistered vessels. Sheila Pearson is an environmentalist who has investigated this problem.

- Expert A:** When we think of the ocean, we don't even consider that it might have an air-pollution problem. Perhaps you won't choke on thick smog, but unfortunately greenhouse gases, including CO₂, methane, and sulfur dioxide have become detectable, something which wasn't the case just a few years ago. According to our estimates, ocean-going ships are responsible for about 4 percent of all greenhouse gases entering the atmosphere. Admittedly, this is not a lot, since emissions from cars account for over 60 percent of greenhouse gases. But the trend is for emissions from ships to be increasing while those from cars are falling. So while emissions from motor vehicles will be about 20 percent lower than they are now by 2040, those from ships will be 250 percent greater. So any benefits gained from cleaner cars, will be lost due to the increased pollution caused by ships. We would like to see the same strict emission controls on ocean going ships as those imposed on factories and motor vehicles. We should act now, while the problem is minor, instead of taking action in the future when the problem will be out of control.

Reporter: While Sheila's facts indicate there may be a problem, the maritime shipping industry seems reluctant to take any action. In fact, Jan Landon, who is a shipping industry consultant, argues that forcing shipping companies to modify ships so they pollute less will create even greater problems.

- Expert B:** First of all, I think we need to investigate the facts a little more closely. Currently, ocean going ships are responsible for less than 2 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions. Any figure higher than this is simply wrong. The figure just quoted is from the Marine Environmental Protection Committee of the United Nations. And, yes, the trend is for these emissions to increase. This will be due to a rise in international trade which depends on shipping. Even with an increase in emissions of 250 percent, ocean-going vessels will be responsible for less than 10 percent of total greenhouse gases by 2040. Forcing shipping companies to make costly changes to ships so they pollute less will translate into higher shipping fees for our customers and higher prices for consumers. Shipping companies will also have to lay off employees to cover the added costs. Your listeners should bear in mind that the maritime shipping industry, directly and indirectly, employs over three million people worldwide, many of whom will become jobless. There will be inflated prices, and the disruption of an entire industry, while any reduction in greenhouse gases will be negligible.

Reporter: The dilemma is clear. We need to find a balance between safeguarding our environment while at the same time maintaining the health of an important industry. We need to find a way to reduce a source of pollution without this leading to increased prices and unemployment.

36. What dilemma does the program focus on?
37. According to the environmentalist, what is currently true about ocean going ships?
38. What is the environmentalist recommending?
39. In what way does the consultant disagree with the environmentalist?
40. According to the consultant, what will happen if shipping companies are forced to change their ships?

SEGMENT 2

Announcer: Whenever adults try to learn a foreign language, they end up feeling frustrated when they fail to go beyond a certain level. John Smith investigates why adults are not successful as language learners, especially compared with kids.

Reporter: It happens time and again. A family immigrates and all its members have to learn the language of their new home. The kids seem to become completely proficient in a relatively short time. In fact, the younger the child, the faster the language is acquired. As for the parents, try as they might, they never reach a level of competence comparable to that of their children. Some people may even never learn the language of their adopted country no matter how long they live there. I asked linguist Professor Denise Tryphon why this discrepancy occurs.

Expert: Perhaps before investigating the problem of adults learning a foreign language, we should look into why and how we learn language to begin with. It is, first of all, an involuntary process. Infants start responding to language almost upon birth, and start uttering sounds to express themselves more or less within the first few months of life. By the time a baby is a year old, he or she can produce identifiable words. By the time a child is three, he or she can formulate entirely new sentences without having been formally taught. And by the time a child is six or seven, he or she can combine elaborate discourse with a surprisingly sophisticated vocabulary. And all this takes place with a limited amount of direct formal instruction. In a nutshell, language is acquired through exposure. We linguists like to use the term, "language instinct." By this I mean children learn language automatically, or instinctively, just as they learn how to walk, eat, or drink. We've realized, as a species, that language is important for our survival. I think this is why kids learn language, and even two languages, so quickly.

Reporter: You've explained why kids learn language at a relatively fast rate. It seems that they are naturally wired to do so. But you haven't explained why adults seem unable to reach a comparable level of proficiency. Is our natural ability to learn language impaired as we grow older?

Expert: At a prepubescent level, we can learn one or more languages with relative ease. This ability starts abating as we enter adolescence. Our rate of acquisition slows down even more as we approach the end of puberty. By the time we enter adulthood, our ability to learn language

is somehow hampered. There's another factor as well. Speaking is a motor skill, like playing a sport or a musical instrument. And just as children master all motor skills more effortlessly than adults, likewise the ability to speak comes to them more easily. This is why children learn a foreign language with complete fluency, while adults, even after decades of exposure and use, can never speak a foreign language without an accent, even a slightly discernible one. Of course, adults have to devote more of their mental resources to grapple with professional and personal challenges. This happens at the expense of being able to learn new skills, including a foreign language.

Reporter: As with everything, there are exceptions in that some adults do manage to learn a foreign language as well as a native speaker when it comes to articulating their ideas. But one thing that seems unmanageable for adults is to speak a foreign language without an accent.

41. What does the speaker say about adults learning a foreign language?
42. What does the speaker believe about young children?
43. What are six or seven-year-old children able to do?
44. What seems to be true according to the expert?
45. What problem is the expert mainly dealing with?

SEGMENT 3

Announcer: The competition between computers and humans with regards to chess has been long and hard. After numerous decades, though, it seems safe now to declare a winner. Here's Mary Brown with a fascinating report.

Reporter: We had always believed that computers could never compete with the human brain when it came to chess. This was because we once perceived chess as a game based on intelligence and abstract thought. I spoke with Professor Andrew Santini, an expert in artificial intelligence and a competent chess player himself. Professor Santini explains that chess is based more on math and logic than on intelligence.

- Expert:** Before we discuss how things are, I want to briefly go over the history of devices designed to play chess. The first attempt to develop a chess-playing machine goes back the 1770s. That was when an Austrian inventor Wolfgang von Kempelen, introduced a wooden chess-playing robot. Of course, it wasn't a real robot, but a box with a human hidden inside. Von Kempelen's hoax wasn't discovered until 1820, years after his death. Observers at the time thought that this machine was doing its own thinking. Von Kempelen, who was a master chess player himself, managed to beat some of the best players of his day. But, as I said, it was a human who was playing, not a machine. A rudimentary chess-playing machine was invented by Spanish mathematician, Leonardo Torres, in 1910. It moved the pieces with mechanical arms, but even a novice human player could defeat it. It was more of a novelty than a non-human chess player.
47. Von Kempelen's hoax wasn't discovered until 1820, years after his death. Observers at the time thought that this machine was doing its own thinking. Von Kempelen, who was a master chess player himself, managed to beat some of the best players of his day. But, as I said, it was a human who was playing, not a machine. A rudimentary chess-playing machine was invented by Spanish mathematician, Leonardo Torres, in 1910. It moved the pieces with mechanical arms, but even a novice human player could defeat it. It was more of a novelty than a non-human chess player.

Reporter: So it seems that the first chess-playing devices were either outright fakes, or inferior when playing against a human. When did computers start becoming a serious challenge for human players? And when did computers start defeating chess masters?

Expert: The first chess playing computers appeared in the 1950s, but they were agonizingly slow when processing data about potential moves. It wasn't practical for humans to play against such a machine. The first successful chess playing computer appeared in the late 1980s. To understand how computer chess improved, we should look at a series of tournaments played between computers and Garry Kasparov, who continues to be seen as the best chess master of all time. The first two-game tournament, in 1989, was with the chess computer Deep Thought, developed by Carnegie Mellon University. Kasparov easily won both games. In early 1996, Kasparov competed with IBM's Deep Blue. In six matches, Kasparov lost only one, winning three and ending two with a draw. Kasparov was still the better player, but the technology had clearly made progress. So in a 1997 rematch, an upgraded Deep Blue defeated Kasparov winning three games to two with one game ending in a draw. Kasparov was again defeated in a 2003 tournament against a computer known as Deep Fritz, but only marginally. Chess master Vladimir Kramnik, who had unseated Kasparov as world champion in 2001, also played against Deep Fritz in December of 2006. Kramnik lost two matches, with the other four ending in draws. After the Kramnik / Deep Fritz tournament, it had become clear that chess-playing computers had evolved into formidable opponents even for the world's most competent human players.

Reporter: Computer chess has since grown in popularity. There are countless websites that offer free games to players of all levels. And far from a silly pastime, chess masters see it as an invaluable tool. They currently rely on such applications to study potential moves, train their minds, and generally improve their performance.

46. According to the information, what do chess masters seem to think about computer chess?
47. What did Wolfgang von Kempelen do?
48. When was the first successful chess-playing computer made?
49. Why does the expert refer to Kasparov so extensively?
50. What does the expert seem to believe about chess-playing computers?

PRACTICE TEST 2

LISTENING

Part 1

Example:

- M:** Mary and John should have come by now. I wonder what's keeping them?
- W:** It may seem as if they'll never get here, but they will. You know how Mary is when she's getting ready to go out.
- M:** I guess you're right. Besides, I can't think of one time they haven't been late.

1.

- M:** Remember that music store down the street, the one where we used to buy all our CDs?
- W:** That closed years ago. What about it?
- M:** Believe it or not, it's gonna open under new management.
- W:** Someone should tell them about downloading music from the Internet!

2.
M: Enjoy coming to the fitness center yesterday?
W: I can't really say I didn't like it. It was something different.
M: Gonna join?
W: Well, working out is not something I can do on a daily basis. Too busy I guess.
3.
W: Did you have a run-in with Peter again?
M: Yeah, but he was the one who started it.
W: And knowing you, you probably wanted to have the last word.
4.
W: What d'ya suppose is the matter with Bill?
M: He may be coming down with the flu or something.
5.
M: That economics exam was really challenging.
W: Maybe so, but not half as much as biology.
M: Yeah, biology was a real pain.
6.
W: Why haven't you repaired the chair?
M: I don't know where you got the idea that I was going to.
W: Too bad, 'cause you're so good with your hands.
7.
W: D'ya wanna come to a concert with me tonight?
M: Depends on what sort of music we're gonna be listening to.
W: It's gonna be a jazz concert.
M: I'm not really into that sort of music, but I don't have anything better to do.
8.
W: Put out that cigarette. I can't stand that stale smell in the room afterwards.
M: Sorry. I had no idea it bugged you so much.
W: It does, just as it would any non-smoker.
9.
W: You know that Sam and John were fired yesterday?
M: Yeah, and as they were leaving they knocked over this expensive monitor.
W: Come on. That was an accident.
M: Are you kidding? It was on purpose.
10.
W: Ever learn why Joe and Anne had that fight?
M: It's none of my business, so I didn't ask.
W: You mean, you don't want to know?
M: What's there to know?
11.
M: Did the accident occur while you were driving to work?
W: Yeah, and the guy that hit me had been drinking.
M: He couldn't have been drinking. It was morning.
W: You obviously know little about alcoholics.
12.
M: I got really angry with this customer today.
W: You might be a little more patient next time, or you'll be out of a job.
M: Is that a threat?
W: Take it any way you want.

13.
W: I think TV is just getting worse and worse.
M: You're not the only one to think that. I haven't turned on my own for over a week.
W: And to think that some people watch TV for several hours a day!
M: Yeah, what a waste!
14.
W: I didn't expect you to get here so quickly!
M: Well, maybe I was speeding more than I should've.
15.
W: I'll no longer have trouble getting a book I want to read. I just got a computer tablet.
M: You can do more than read books on those things. You can surf the Internet, watch movies...
W: Yeah, I know, you can even play games, but I got mine just to be able to access popular fiction.

Part 2

Example:

Have you heard the news about that new job I've been offered?

16. Is it true that you've never missed a game for the past several seasons when our team is playing at home?
17. If you're chilly, why not put on an extra sweater instead of turning up the thermostat?
18. Do you really expect to have read that whole book by the end of the week?
19. How long are we supposed to wait here? I'm awfully hungry.
20. Do you really think Vanessa is cut out to be an athlete?
21. How many people who work for this company are university graduates?
22. Don't ya wanna know how the movie ended?
23. If you're not gonna eat it, can I have the rest of your hamburger?
24. Did you manage to speak to Ms. Jones?
25. Is it okay if I don't come to dinner with you?
26. Weren't you supposed to call Mark about our not coming?
27. Did you get a chance to check out that new fashion magazine?
28. Are you going to be very busy later on this evening?
29. If you can't stand game shows, why don't you change the channel?
30. I think that book you're reading might be a bit over your head.
31. When you see Anne tell her I'm still waiting for that fifty dollars she owes me.
32. Do you agree with allowing people to smoke in here?
33. Since when did you start eating meat? I always thought you were a vegetarian.
34. Why do you need to handle all that correspondence when you have a secretary?
35. We're toying with the idea of going on that trip with George and Mary.

Part 3

SEGMENT 1

Announcer: When you tickle someone they laugh, which means they like it, right? When tickling is consensual and

playful, then it is enjoyable. However, there are some circumstances under which tickling is associated with something other than pleasure. Mary Brown reports.

Reporter: It is common for friends and siblings to tickle one another as they play. In fact, all mammals enjoy getting tickled. But getting tickled, after a certain point, seems to be a source of annoyance even though it results in laughter. Brain scientists in University College London are trying to figure out why this is so. One interesting finding is that tickling and our reaction to it is associated with panic. Here's Professor John Anderson to tell us more.

36. **Expert:** It may sound strange, but we laugh when we're tickled as a reflex and not because we enjoy it. Tickling is a reflexive action of the body which tells us that something foreign, like an insect or something is touching us. It's like the body saying, "Hey! There's a creepy crawly thing on you that you may not like. Get rid of it!" It is also a signal telling us a part of our body is being touched in such a way that we may be threatened. It's no coincidence that the most ticklish parts of our bodies are also the most vulnerable. We laugh because we feel nervous, not because we're enjoying the tickling. If someone forces that part of our body even more, we start feeling pain. For instance, the lower abdomen is an extremely vulnerable part of our body. It's also one of the most ticklish parts. Our brain tells us to feel uncomfortable since it doesn't know the purpose of the tickling. But when someone touches our arm, or our chest, because these body parts are protected by bone and muscle, our brain tells us not to feel threatened, so we don't laugh.
37. **Expert:** That's true. Well, when we laugh, irrespective of the reason, the brain releases endorphins, a naturally occurring hormone with pain-relieving properties. The more we laugh, the more endorphins are released, leading to feelings of pleasure, which is why we enjoy being tickled. But up to a point. Because when we're tickled, the brain also receives the following admittedly conflicting signal: "There's something foreign touching you, something that's not you, so be careful."
38. **Expert:** This is why we can't tickle ourselves. The brain knows it's us and not someone else so it tells us not to be afraid. If tickling persists, then despite the laughter, the body starts feeling threatened, and the release of endorphins stops. In one interesting experiment, a group of people were made to tickle themselves with a stick, then they were tickled by researchers and then they were tickled by a mechanical device. There was almost no laughter when people tickled themselves, but there was the same amount of laughter when people were tickled by human researchers and the mechanical device. So it doesn't matter what causes the tickling, as long as it's something not controlled directly by us.

Reporter: So the laughter experienced from tickling is more like a nervous reaction and not because of pleasure. Still, it's interesting to note that, despite what you say, we still feel, initially at any rate, pleasure when someone tickles us. We enjoy it. And we tickle our nearest and dearest.

39. **Expert:** Yes, as a matter of fact there has! A new fossil discovery in Argentina more or less proves that birds and dinosaurs are direct relatives. The fossil, which is believed to be some 90 million years old, is of a two-meter-long dinosaur which has a skeleton remarkably like a bird's. For instance, this dinosaur stood on its hind legs and had two forearms that were shaped like wings. One paleontologist on the team jokingly told me that they first thought they had discovered a king-sized chicken. This observation may sound like a joke, but it perfectly describes the findings. It looks as if the skeleton doesn't belong to a dinosaur, but to a bird species. This brings me to my final point. There is a bone known as the furcula, which means little fork in Latin.

Reporter: And what about situations where we tickle people because we love them, because we want them to be happy? For instance, mothers tickle their babies. Tickling is not simply something we do to make someone laugh, or rather it's a bit more than that. Tickling is actually a form of non-verbal communication for humans, and for other mammals. Basically, we tickle a person because we want to bond with this person.

36. According to the information, why do people laugh when they are tickled?
37. According to the speaker, what parts of our bodies are the most ticklish?
38. Why do we feel pleasure when we're tickled?
39. According to the speaker, why can't we tickle ourselves?
40. According to the information, what is one reason people tickle each other?

SEGMENT 2

Announcer: To the surprise of many, paleontologists concur that the humble bird may have a very prominent ancestor, namely the dinosaur. Although no bird, apart from the ostrich, is anywhere as big as some of the smaller dinosaurs, birds and dinosaurs share many similarities. Here's John Smith to tell us more.

Reporter: Before the days of Darwin, early paleontologists believed dinosaurs had no real connection with existing animal species. The commonly accepted theory was that, after dinosaurs became extinct, entirely new life forms sprang into existence. It was towards the early 20th century that scientists started pondering on whether or not dinosaurs didn't actually die out, but evolved into something else, like lizards. Since the 1970s, as more and more dinosaur fossils have been unearthed, a link between birds and dinosaurs is becoming more firmly established. I recently spoke with Professor Linda Blake, a paleontologist from State University.

Expert: The similarities between birds and dinosaurs are so obvious, that I'm surprised early paleontologists never suspected a connection. Like birds, dinosaurs laid eggs in nests. And as birds generally live in flocks, dinosaurs lived in large groups. Regarding the question of size ... you know ... birds are so small, but dinosaurs were so huge. Well, dinosaurs had fewer adversaries than present-day birds. So having fewer enemies allowed them to evolve to such a greater size. There was also a higher oxygen content in the earth's atmosphere which permitted all living things to be large. For instance, 80 or 90 million years ago, insects were as big as some present-day birds simply because they could intake greater amounts of oxygen. Trees were also tremendously taller, reaching heights of over thirty or forty meters.

Reporter: That's all really interesting, Professor Blake. But it's still possible that birds and dinosaurs are so much alike by chance. After all, other unrelated species share similarities without their having a genetic connection. Has there been any recent fossil discovery that can lead one to conclude without any doubt that birds evolved from dinosaurs?

Expert: Yes, as a matter of fact there has! A new fossil discovery in Argentina more or less proves that birds and dinosaurs are direct relatives. The fossil, which is believed to be some 90 million years old, is of a two-meter-long dinosaur which has a skeleton remarkably like a bird's. For instance, this dinosaur stood on its hind legs and had two forearms that were shaped like wings. One paleontologist on the team jokingly told me that they first thought they had discovered a king-sized chicken. This observation may sound like a joke, but it perfectly describes the findings. It looks as if the skeleton doesn't belong to a dinosaur, but to a bird species. This brings me to my final point. There is a bone known as the furcula, which means little fork in Latin.

The furcula, or wishbone, is found in all birds, irrespective of species. It is located on the bird's breast. It is found in no other animal. But the furcula is also found in almost all two-legged dinosaurs. Turkeys, chickens, and canaries all have a furcula. But so did Tyrannosaurus Rexes, just to mention one familiar species!

- Reporter:** We should thank Professor Linda Blake. It's interesting to note that paleontologists in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were convinced that dinosaurs were nothing more than massive reptiles. What we have is another example of how modern-day researchers, using improved methods, are upending previously held scientific beliefs.

41. What are the speakers interested in?
42. What did early paleontologists believe?
43. Why were insects bigger 80 or 90 million years ago?
44. Why does the expert emphasize the fossil discovery in Argentina?
45. What is one important conclusion the talk leads to?

SEGMENT 3

Announcer: Despite soaring fuel costs, a lot of motorists are choosing to buy an SUV, or sports and utility vehicle. SUVs are also known as jeeps, four-wheel-drive vehicles or off-road vehicles. Whatever you call them, our guests think they're extremely disadvantageous. Mary Brown reports.

- Reporter:** Four-wheel-drive vehicles have been around for decades. The first one, the legendary Jeep, first rolled off the production line in the 1940s as an army vehicle never intended for civilian use. Another one, the Land-Rover, first made exclusively for mining companies operating in Africa, has been sold since the 1950s. These vehicles, with their unique design, were ideal for rural conditions. But four-wheel-drive vehicles started becoming popular for urban settings in the 1990s, and that's when they started being problematic. Aaron Steiner, well-known environmentalist, is here to give us one reason we should steer clear of SUVs.

- Expert:** Thanks, Mary. SUVs have become a problem because car companies in the 1990s started making them bigger, heavier, and more powerful. Some SUVs are as heavy as four tons! They burn a lot of gasoline, and produce a great deal of air pollution. This should be enough to discourage a responsible motorist from buying one. I mean, the average car burns between 6 to 10 liters of fuel per 100 kilometers, but SUVs typically consume over 20 liters of fuel per 100 kilometers. Compact cars need as little as 4 or 5 liters per 100 kilometers. So if we consider their carbon footprint, we can see that SUVs are disastrous.

- Reporter:** Aaron has just explained why SUVs are bad for the environment, which I'm sure listeners are aware of. But one surprising bit of information is that SUVs are more dangerous than regular cars in accidents. Peter Stinson, president of the National Insurers Association explains why.

- Expert:** The main reason people give for buying an SUV is that it's safer than a conventional car. Personally, I see this as a false belief. Statistics do give the impression that SUVs are safer in some types of accidents. However, in accidents in which the vehicle rolls over, fatality rates are significantly higher for SUVs. And this is the point I want to stress. SUVs almost always roll over in accidents. SUVs are so prone to

- rolling over due to their design. These vehicles have been made for low speeds over difficult terrain, which is why they are so high and top-heavy. Driving them at more than 80 or 90 kilometers an hour is asking for trouble. It shouldn't be done. Statistics indicate that it is more likely for a driver and passenger to be killed in an SUV than in a regular car. Because they have a false sense of security, drivers and passengers in SUVs generally neglect to buckle up, which is foolish, since seatbelts save lives. In roll-over accidents, over 9 people are killed annually for every 100,000 SUVs. The average is around 3 deaths a year for normal cars. To put it differently, SUVs make up 10 percent of the vehicles on the road but they're responsible for over 15 percent of all traffic fatalities.

Reporter: So we have two reasons to opt for smaller vehicles when shopping around for a set of wheels. SUVs are not only bad for our environment, but we are also exposing ourselves and our passengers to greater risks when we are driving one. Besides, finding a place to park is so much easier with a smaller car.

46. What does one expert mean when he says, "SUVs are disastrous?"
47. According to the information, which statement regarding SUVs is false?
48. According to the information, what mistake do SUV drivers commonly make?
49. According to the information, why were SUVs originally produced?
50. Why are SUVs so dangerous?

PRACTICE TEST 3

LISTENING

Part 1

Example:

- M:** Mary and John should have come by now. I wonder what's keeping them?
W: It may seem as if they'll never get here, but they will. You know how Mary is when she's getting ready to go out.
M: I guess you're right. Besides, I can't think of one time they haven't been late.

1.
W: How did the movie end?
M: Don't ask me. I turned in 'cause I was so tired.
W: But it was an adventure movie. It should've kept you up.

2.
W: You don't seem to smoke as much as you used to.
M: I've cut down a lot, but I still manage half a pack a day.
W: Half a pack! That's still a lot as far as I'm concerned.
M: Yeah, I wish I could stop completely.

3.
M: You're coming out to dinner with me, aren't you?
W: Okay, but only as long as it's your treat. I don't have much cash to spare.
M: So I guess it's gonna be on me.

4.
M: We have to read every chapter in this book?
W: The prof said we could skip chapters 5 to 8.

M: That's a relief, but I wish he'd left out chapter 3 too. It's the longest one of all!

5.

M: What dya think of the new building downtown?

W: How could anyone not see it for what it is...an eyesore!

M: That pretty well sums up my view of it too.

6.

W: Who washed my woolen sweater? It's shrunk!

M: Who else? But I thought it was dirty.

W: Now it's clean, but you've ruined it! Don't you know that you're not supposed to wash woolen clothing in hot water?

M: Well I do now!

7.

W: You managed to get here on time this morning, didn't you?

M: Yeah, but I wouldn't've if Jim hadn't driven me.

8.

W: How about spending the weekend with us?

M: Lemme see if my wife has anything planned and I'll get back to you.

W: Well, make it quick. What we wanna do involves making reservations.

9.

W: Did someone actually take your wallet?

M: Yeah! Right outa my pocket. But I only had some change in it anyway.

W: But what about your driver's license, your credit cards...

M: I immediately canceled my credit cards, so that's not a problem. And I'll just get a new license.

10.

W: What dya think of last night's pizza?

M: It was a bit too salty for my liking.

11.

W: Like my new outfit? I had wanted to buy it for so long!

M: Well it does make you look slimmer.

W: I may look slimmer, but I'm actually a bit heavier since you last saw me.

12.

W: Aren't you sneezing a bit too much today?

M: Maybe I'm coming down with something.

W: Well, there is this bug that's going around.

13.

M: I just finished reading this really fascinating travel book on China.

W: Really? Will you lend it to me?

M: Sure! As soon as you read it, you'll want to take the first plane and go there.

W: I don't see that happening any time soon!

14.

M: I've made a real mess of my office.

W: I'll say, but you'll have to tidy it up yourself 'cause the cleaner comes every other day.

M: Can't you help me?

W: I wouldn't count on it!

15.

W: How can you spend so many precious hours playing those silly computer games?

M: I don't think they're so bad. In fact, they're quite entertaining.

W: How can sitting in front of a monitor clicking on a mouse for hours on end be fun?

Part 2

Example:

Have you heard the news about that new job I've been offered?

16. We've simply got to do something about our phone bill, don't you think?

17. Can you come by and pick me up on your way to work tomorrow?

18. Isn't it understandable for us to be upset about having our salaries cut?

19. Which anniversary are you celebrating?

20. How come you didn't tell me you were coming? I'd've made special arrangements.

21. Does this sweater need to be dry-cleaned or is it machine washable?

22. You know, that was a really close call. Don't you think I should take the wheel?

23. Did you catch the weather report 'cause I was planning to go camping over the weekend.

24. What did Christine say we should do with these empty boxes?

25. Are you still having problems with your back?

26. What happened to the Ali file that I put on my desk a minute ago? Or at least I think I did.

27. Didn't you think the test was a little different from what we've been used to?

28. Don't you think we'd be better off leaving early in the morning?

29. You mean to say that Anne paid over 100 dollars for a pen?

30. Why don't you turn on the air-conditioner 'cause I think it's kinda stuffy in here.

31. Have you managed to ask your boss for that raise yet or are you still putting it off?

32. How much sugar do you take in your coffee?

33. Isn't it a bit too late for you to be eating such a heavy supper?

34. I'm sorry, but I seem to have forgotten your first name.

35. What exactly are you implying when you say Mary isn't as good a friend as she appears to be?

Part 3

SEGMENT 1

Announcer: It is the stuff of art and comedy. Men and women locked in a disagreement because they supposedly think differently from one another. But is there such a huge difference between the way men and women use their brains? Reporter Mary Brown tries to answer this question in her report. 36.

Reporter: Thanks, Jim. Theories abound about whether or not men and women think differently. Some are based on differences in how boys and girls are brought up, while others suggest that the brains of men and women are different at birth. It's that on-going debate of nature versus nurture. As with all controversies, research results have done little to resolve this one. In fact, they frequently add to the confusion. I recently spoke to David Sousa, Professor of Neurology at State University.

Expert: I can cite two experiments that focus on this nature-versus-nurture dichotomy. One tries to prove that differences in thinking processes for the sexes are due to physiological factors... I mean due to the way the male and female brain is formed. The other indicates that differences are a result of how a person has been raised. Regarding the first experiment, a group of men and women were given math problems while their brain activity was measured by a PET scanner. Researchers found that, although men and women came up with the same answers, they used different parts of their brains to accomplish this. Most of the brain activity in men was in the right side of the brain. As for women, both sides of the brain were equally active as they figured out the math problems. However, the women and men in our experimental group worked on the problems with equal speed and accuracy. The fact that men and women used different parts of their brains is an indication that there are structural differences between the male and female adult brain. There is, however, very little research on whether or not there are structural differences between male and female brains at birth.

Reporter: So I guess men and women may use different parts of their brains when doing calculations, but they come up with the same results. That's interesting. What about the other experiment?

Expert: Yes, well, it's not admittedly too scientific but it provides interesting insight into how men and women organize their thoughts. Psychologist colleagues of mine gave twenty men and twenty women a test. Each person was supposed to iron a shirt, fry an egg, make a telephone call, send a quick email, and prepare a supermarket shopping list. They had fifteen minutes to complete all these tasks. Of the twenty women who were tested, 15 successfully completed all five tasks in less than fifteen minutes. Only two of the women had serious problems. They had been raised by single fathers. Of the men, only three managed to complete the tasks within the 15-minute time limit. Perhaps not coincidentally, they had been raised by single mothers. Most of the men failed miserably. This experiment indicates that maybe women are able to simultaneously perform more than three or four tasks, unlike men, because this is what they've been conditioned to do from childhood. Men, however, are never placed in a situation where they have to do several things at the same time. However, if conditioned from an early age, men too can manage multi-tasking without any problems.

Reporter: Thanks, Dave. I am inclined to conclude that, despite the first experiment Dave mentioned, any differences in how men and women think are more the result of conditioning than anything else. In other words, nurture is probably a lot more important than nature on this one.

36. What issue are the speakers interested in solving?
37. According to the speaker, what did researchers find from the experiment with the math problems?
38. What seems true with regards to the math experiment?
39. What does the second experiment seem to prove?
40. What conclusion would both speakers probably agree with?

SEGMENT 2

Announcer: Dogs have been our best friends longer than any other animal. Some experts believe that the dog has been a member of human society for the past 50,000 or

60,000 years. But why have a dog as a pet and not another canine species like a wolf or fox? Here's reporter John Smith, who tries to answer this question in his report. 41.

Reporter: It's almost impossible to conclude when dogs became our permanent companions. It seems they were domesticated almost the same time humans started forming permanent communities. Over the millennia, dogs have been performing more or less the same duties. In many instances — and this might upset animal lovers — dogs have become food themselves. This is especially the case in China and Korea, where dog meat is a delicacy. One question that persists about dogs is why is it that they have become domesticated while other members of the canine family, for example wolves or foxes, have always remained wild? Here's Miriam Lopez, Professor of Veterinary Sciences at the University of New Mexico. 42. 41.

Expert: People always ask me why is it that we've managed to domesticate dogs, but not other animals from the canine family. The question is more interesting than a lot of people think with regards to wolves, because dogs and wolves are genetically similar. Wolves and dogs have almost identical DNA sequences, and dogs that have become feral, or wild, have been known to mate with wolves. I should mention that offspring of dog/wolf pairings do not make good pets. Wolf/dog puppies grow into very unpredictable adults. Wolves and dogs do have a number of similarities with regards to their behavior. Both animals howl, and both form into packs where there are fewer females than males. They also eat more or less the same things. And unlike most other mammals, they are equally active during the day and night. However, unlike dogs, wolves have never been trained to be obedient to humans. 41.

Reporter: So dogs and wolves, and I guess foxes, too, share many genetic and behavioral similarities. But you haven't explained why dogs can be domesticated, while other canine species cannot. In addition, dogs differ greatly in size and shape according to their breed, while wolves, foxes, and other canines are very uniform in what they look like.

Expert: If dogs and wolves are physically different, it is more due to how humans have been breeding dogs over the centuries than to natural evolution. Judging by the remains of dogs found in pre-historic settlements, the first dogs to be domesticated were different from wolves only with regards to size. Dogs were smaller, and probably had less hair, but they probably looked very similar to wolves. And the domestication of dogs may have happened without humans actually pursuing it themselves. Dogs probably wandered onto human settlements scavenging for food. They more or less domesticated themselves. Wolves, however, were and are better hunters. They never needed to look for food among humans. As for foxes, they are part of the canine family but they are so genetically different from both dogs and wolves that they belong to a category of their own. 44. 43.

Reporter: Dogs and wolves then are more similar than they are different. If dogs have been domesticated, it's only because they are more subservient. Wolves are better at fending for themselves. Dogs, however, have one tremendous advantage over wolves. They are far smarter than their wilder cousins. 45.

41. What are the speakers mostly interested in?
42. What does the speaker say about dogs in China?

43. What seems to be the greatest difference between wolves and dogs?
44. According to the speaker, why were dogs domesticated?
45. What seems to be true about dogs?

SEGMENT 3

Announcer: Plastic bags have become the norm wherever we go shopping, whether it's food at the supermarket or clothes at the mall. But this over-reliance on plastic is environmentally harmful. Mary Brown reports.

46. **Reporter:** Thanks Jim. When plastic bags started replacing paper bags thirty years ago, environmentalists predicted there'd be a problem so it's something that needn't have happened in the first place. Plastic bags are one of the most common forms of litter on city streets, and in the countryside. Because they're so light, the wind can blow them anywhere, including out to sea. Once at sea, they're swallowed by sea turtles, whales and fish. Dead whales and dolphins have been found with plastic bags caught in their throats. Here's environmentalist Brian Jenkins, who's investigated the problem.

Expert: Most people haven't realized how serious this problem is. Close to 300 billion plastic bags are used annually worldwide. That's almost 600 million bags a day! Generally, each of these bags is used twice — once to carry stuff from the store or supermarket, and a second time for

47. garbage. Of all these millions and millions of bags, only about 3 percent ever get recycled. It's tempting to say that we should do away with plastic bags, but they do offer some
48. important advantages. They're extremely cheap and easy to store. Despite their light weight, they can carry heavy loads and they're more hygienic than paper, which is important when it comes to food. It's because they're so safe with food that supermarkets and food stores use them so extensively. By the way, because they're used with food, this is why plastic bags can't be recycled so easily.

Reporter: So then the fact that plastic bags can be recycled or that they are made of recyclable material has little relevance. Do you suggest doing away with plastic bags completely?

Expert: Well, we should continue using plastic bags, but we should do so more wisely, and less wastefully. When we buy one or two items, we shouldn't ask for a bag. I've seen people buy a chocolate bar at a convenience store and put it in a plastic bag. A lot of bulky products, like detergents or soft drinks, come in packages with handles making a bag unnecessary. Supermarkets can start encouraging customers to bring back their bags for

49. re-use. Some supermarket chains have started charging customers a nominal price for bags. It's a tactic that works, since supermarkets that make customers pay even a slight amount use up fewer bags. I think the best solution would be for consumers to use canvas bags or any bags that can be reused again and again.

- Reporter:** Thank you Brian. So I guess, like so many other
50. environmental problems, the solution for this one greatly depends on how willing we are to alter some of our habits as consumers. And, for what it's worth, using biodegradable bags isn't really a solution. Normal plastic bags take about 200 years to biodegrade, which is a long time. Modern plastic bags are made with materials that allow them to

biodegrade in two years. But if we consider the billions of plastic bags used every year, even if they biodegrade more quickly, they are still a serious problem for our environment.

46. In what way is the problem of plastic bags similar to other environmental problems?
47. According to the speaker, what seems to be true about plastic bags?
48. Apparently, why do supermarkets use plastic bags so extensively?
49. What is one solution being used by some supermarkets?
50. According to the reporter's conclusion, how can we solve the problem caused by plastic bags?

PRACTICE TEST 4

LISTENING

Part 1

Example:

- M:** Mary and John should have come by now. I wonder what's keeping them?
- W:** It may seem as if they'll never get here, but they will. You know how Mary is when she's getting ready to go out.
- M:** I guess you're right. Besides, I can't think of one time they haven't been late.
- 1.
- W:** Nancy's sent me an email message this morning. She seems to be really enjoying her new job.
- M:** Read between the lines and you'll see how she really feels 'cause she's told me differently.
- W:** That's strange 'cause she's always shared her problems with me.
- 2.
- W:** What did Christine do last night?
- M:** She said something about staying home, but I don't think she finally did.
- W:** I would've expected as much. We both know she's not the stay-at-home type, especially in the evening.

- 3.
- M:** Do you have to talk so loudly on the phone? I'm trying to concentrate.
- W:** Sorry! I didn't notice you were in the room.
- M:** How could you notice me? I'm not making the kind of racket you are!

- 4.
- M:** It's said that dolphins have a proportionately larger brain than humans. Hey, that might be proof that they're more intelligent than us.
- W:** I've heard the part about the bigger brain, too, but that needn't mean that they're smarter.

- 5.
- W:** Bill's always contradicting himself.
- M:** Yeah, I know what you mean. But too bad it's not his only shortcoming. He has even greater failings.

- 6.
- M:** So, what do you wanna know about yesterday's meeting?
- W:** Just give me an overview of what went on. But I want you to email me a more elaborate report by the end of the day.

7.
W: Have you seen Mary yet today?
M: No, why?
W: Well she said something about wanting to see you in order to tell you something really important.
M: Mary's always exaggerating things.
W: Well I don't think she's exaggerating this time.
8.
M: I found that study interesting. I mean the one showing that kids who use information technology to learn math are no better than kids who learn in a low-tech environment.
W: Yeah, I read it and went over the facts, but I still question its validity.
9.
W: Why do you speak so highly of Chris?
M: Because I really owe him a lot. In fact, I see him as one of my mentors.
10.
W: You look tired. Didn't you get much sleep?
M: I had some visitors who were supposed to stay for a bit. But they ended up staying until well past midnight. For a while I thought I was going to be stuck with them for the entire night!
11.
M: Why's Mary not in her office? Is she late or something?
W: She called in to say she was gonna stay home. Said something about stomach pains.
M: Well, there is this bug going around. Weren't both of us away all last week?
12.
W: Don't you look at your cell phone? I sent you a message last night asking you to call me.
M: Sorry, but I didn't have it with me. Forgotten it at the office. Luckily it was on my desk this morning.
13.
W: Hey, why aren't the lights working? We should call an electrician.
M: I'm afraid I didn't pay our last electricity bill. The power's been cut off.
W: I can't believe you're so irresponsible!
14.
W: So, what've you decided? Are you going to rent this apartment?
M: It is smaller than what I had wanted, but it does fit most of my needs. So, I may as well sign the lease.
15.
M: I think I'm gonna take the day off tomorrow.
W: On such short notice? I don't think so 'cause there's no way I can find a colleague to replace you.
M: Oh...alright then.

Part 2

Example:

Have you heard the news about that new job I've been offered?

16. Don't you think you should stick to soft drinks since your tonight's designated driver?

17. Didn't you say something about not drinking any more coffee?
 18. When did you take that photo of yourself that you're using on your Facebook profile?
 19. Have you heard both versions of how the accident happened?
 20. Wasn't it a most fascinating discussion?
 21. Didn't I tell you to go easy on the sugar 'cause I'm trying to lose weight.
 22. Was Mary upset about not being given the week off?
 23. I don't know what to wear to the party. Should I put on a tie or dress casually?
 24. I'm gonna be making some coffee. Dya wanna join me?
 25. Have you been having those back pains for very long?
 26. Weren't we supposed to meet later today to discuss the new proposals?
 27. If you can't log onto the computer, maybe it's because you're typing in the wrong password or something.
 28. Just who were you referring to when you said that some people around here are lazy?
 29. Don't you think you paid more than you should've for that skirt?
 30. Don't you ever get fed up with watching the news on TV? Wouldn't you rather watch something else?
 31. Tell me how your exam went.
 32. If I want to travel to Prague, can I book a hotel on the Internet or do I have to go through a travel agent?
 33. Wasn't someone supposed to go to the post office to pick up the parcels?
 34. I still can't understand why Peter didn't show up for the meeting like he said he would.
 35. If you ask me, I think now would be a good time to break for fifteen minutes or so.

Part 3

SEGMENT 1

Announcer: Most people want to have as many facts as possible before they take any major decisions, especially decisions involving money. So information is indispensable in the decision-making process. Nevertheless, like so many other things, too much of something necessary may end up causing a lot of problems. And this is exactly what is happening with the information-overload most decision-makers in the world of commerce and finance are experiencing. Mary Brown reports. 36.

Reporter: One statement that we almost no longer hear is, "I haven't heard. I didn't know." No matter what it is we want to find out, we can get our information either through printed materials, TV, radio, or the Internet. In fact, people now are having trouble turning off this tremendous amount of information. This over-abundance of information is especially perplexing for mid-level and upper-level managers who have to take decisions that very often involve large sums of money, whether its their clients' or their company's. I spoke with Trevor Howards, Professor of Business Administration and a business consultant.

Expert: This over-abundance of information, as you refer to it, has led to serious consequences within the business community. It's provoked what some people call, Information Fatigue Syndrome. It's basically the result of being exposed to too much information before any decision is taken. Even the most experienced decision-maker becomes incapable of prioritizing. Symptoms include a loss of motivation, morale, and appetite. There may also be acute sleeplessness. 37. 38.

Executives with Information Fatigue Syndrome may develop physiological problems like high blood-pressure and even heart disease.

Reporter: So I guess we're talking about a situation in which I have all these facts and I can't choose which ones are important for the decision I need to make. How does one treat Information Fatigue Syndrome? For instance, do you simply start ignoring information after a certain point?

- Expert:** Well that's one way to deal with the problem. It's interesting to note that decision-makers suffering from Information Fatigue Syndrome become so obsessed with information, that they end up believing that they never have enough. Instead of trying to decrease the amount of info, they actually want more information, which only worsens
40. their condition. Managers should realize that all decisions, even the most important ones, should of course be based on facts, but they should also be based on experience and judgment. We should also learn to distinguish between what is necessary information and what is superfluous. Even really experienced managers sometimes can't tell the difference, so they let some minor detail which has no bearing on what they want to do inhibit them from deciding. Taking decisions means taking risks and being decisive. Many sufferers, feeling they lack decisiveness, start feeling inadequate and reluctant to take risks. And this reluctance to take risks is what hampers
39. the growth. In fact, quite a few well-known companies, like Sony and Nokia, have stopped growing. Many blame this lack of growth on executives unable to choose the paths their respective corporations should take.

Reporter: So, paradoxically, it seems that decision-making may become easier when we have fewer facts. Having too many facts only causes increased confusion. It's also interesting that even large corporations are not immune to this problem.

36. What problem is the discussion generally referring to?
 37. What is Information Fatigue Syndrome?
 38. What is one of the symptoms of the disorder?
 39. Why does the expert mention Sony and Nokia?
 40. According to the information, what should business executives do?

SEGMENT 2

Announcer: Whenever my thirteen-year-old son asks me for cash, I'm always caught in a quandary over how much to give him. I sometimes agonize over whether I should be giving him any money at all. It seems I'm not the only one. Reporter John Smith explains why.

41. **Reporter:** A problem all parents face is how to handle the issue of allowance. Some parents are afraid of not giving kids enough, while others obsess over being too generous with cash. There are other parents who wash their hands of the matter and allow kids to gather pocket money from older siblings, grandparents, or other relatives. The ideal is for kids to have an after-school job and to make their own pocket-money. What's really at issue, though, is not how much money kids should get to spend, or how they get money. The real issue is how kids learn to see money. Mary Suntres, financial consultant, is here to tell us more. Mary.

Expert: I think we should first deal with the problem of how much is enough. One guideline is to go by our kids' ages. Ten-year-olds should get ten dollars a week, while fifteen-year-olds

- should get fifteen. But, our studies show that the average ten-year-old gets well over fifteen dollars a week, while the average fourteen-year-old gets over thirty. That's more than twice the amount they should be getting. This indicates that parents are generally too generous with their kids. If parents want to be so generous, then they should make their kids do something for the extra cash. For instance, even young children can help with the lighter domestic tasks. For starters, they can make sure their rooms are tidy. Older kids can do more menial things like washing the car, doing the dishes or even ironing. Kids should be encouraged to do some of the chores parents do but then receive some sort of remuneration. They should learn that money is earned and it shouldn't be taken for granted. It wouldn't be a bad idea for older teens to get a part-time job and earn their own pocket money.

Reporter: You've covered one side of the issue. That is, how much money kids should be getting, and also how they should get their cash. What about teaching kids the value of money? I think that's a little more complicated.

- Expert:** Yes, well, understanding the value of money involves understanding what money is for. Kids think it's only for spending. Consider how teenagers in the US spend over 100 billion dollars a year. In Japan, teenagers spend more on CDs and clothing than adults. What teenagers do not do is save their money, which wasn't the case in the past. In 1980, in Canada, 20% of sixteen-year-olds had a bank account. In 2009 that figure was 5%. Of course, the economic crisis we're currently in is a blessing in disguise. Parents will become more careful with money. As a result, they will be less generous with how much money they give their kids. Perhaps teenagers today will learn the importance of thrift and being more careful with money.

Reporter: If parents want to teach their kids to value money, they shouldn't be so open-handed. They should encourage them to work for and save their cash. Of course, there are a lot of adults who could use a lesson or two about managing cash.

41. What do parents seem to be worried about?
 42. How much money do ten-year-olds usually receive from their parents?
 43. What should parents do if they want to give their children more money?
 44. What seems to be true about teenagers in Canada?
 45. According to the speaker, what sort of lesson do some adults need?

SEGMENT 3

Announcer: There's a saying, "No news is good news." This means that whenever there is news, it's probably not very pleasant. However, media experts are concerned about the way TV news programs may be needlessly making news stories worse than they actually are. Reporter Mary Brown explains.

Reporter: More people get their news from TV than from any other source, including the Internet. However, TV news is aired by huge media companies that want to attract as many viewers as possible. Ian Adams, director of the media watchdog group, Mindful Media, believes this is a serious problem.

- Expert:** Instead of informing us, news programs are being produced to shock and entertain, very much like Hollywood adventure movies. If we want entertainment, we should be watching movies and not the news. But TV media companies may as well be producing movies since they

47. dramatize events by highlighting violence and crime usually at the expense of objective information. The catch-phrase of media companies is the entertainment value of news. Why is there is so much violence on TV news? Simply because it attracts viewers. And when more people watch the news on TV, media companies can make more money by attracting advertisers. But the TV audience, as a consequence, starts feeling apprehensive. We develop the impression that our streets have become battle zones and the world is falling apart. It's interesting that crime has gone down in most urban centers world-wide, but fear of crime has shot up.
48. Paris, for instance, has among the lowest crime rates in the world, yet in a recent opinion poll, Parisians considered crime to be one of their most serious problems. They have this unjustifiable fear of crime since TV news, particularly on the private channels, is full of violence. And then there's this so-called War on Terror, in which we are convinced there is a terrorist on every plane and around every corner.

Reporter: Since TV news is so subjective and dominated by violence, does this mean we should stop watching it altogether? I mean, what's the point if we are not going to be informed?

- Expert:** Regarding anyone under the age of fifteen, the answer is yes. However, if your child insists on watching, then don't let him or her do it alone. Sit with your child and always explain that terrible crimes may happen, but they aren't something typical. Adult viewers should watch the news on TV no more than once a week, or even once a month. If you want news and you don't have time to read the newspaper or visit a news site on the Internet, then listen to the radio. On the radio, you hear more balanced and objective reporting. The radio includes extensive commentary, explanations or an analysis of the news. Radio news is less sensationalistic by definition. After all, TV is shocking because it uses shocking images. Radio news may report a violent incident, but the absence of images allows us to put the violence in a different and more manageable perspective. Radio relies on intelligent description and not on images. Since radio relies on the spoken word, we have more information than on TV. TV is meant to make us feel, but radio, like newspapers, is designed to make us think.

Reporter: Thank you, Ian, After listening to you I think I'm going to be turning on my radio more often. In closing, mental health experts recommend that anyone suffering from depression must never watch TV news. I think the reasons are obvious.

46. What appears to be the problem with TV news programs?
47. What seems to be the main complaint with regards to TV news programs?
48. Why does the speaker use the example of Paris?
49. What advice is given with regards to watching TV news?
50. What does the speaker say about news on the radio?

PRACTICE TEST 5

LISTENING

Part 1

Example:

M: Mary and John should have come by now. I wonder what's keeping them?

W: It may seem as if they'll never get here, but they will. You know how Mary is when she's getting ready to go out.

M: I guess you're right. Besides, I can't think of one time they haven't been late.

1.

M: How's your new job?

W: Well, it's nothing to write home about.

M: Really? When I first asked you, you told me you liked it.

W: Yes, well, that was then.

2.

W: Why were you laughing so hard during the lecture?

M: I don't know what came over me. I couldn't help it.

3.

M: I couldn't get that last exam question.

W: Yeah, I know what you mean. When I first saw it I thought I understood it. But the more I looked at it...

M: I know, I know, the more confusing it got.

4.

W: Did you know that Mary's a licensed mechanic? I mean, she's able to repair cars.

M: No kidding! So there's more to Mary than meets the eye.

5.

M: Don't tell me you can't find your keys again. You've been misplacing a lot of things lately!

W: With so much that I have on my mind, it's a wonder I can remember anything at all!

6.

W: You know, this room needs a new paint job. Think you can handle it?

M: Lemme see what my schedule is like this weekend.

W: It's not something that needs to be done right away. Whenever you have time.

7.

M: Read my last email?

W: You mean the one you sent a couple of days ago?

M: No, I sent you another one this morning.

W: Really, well let me check my in-box.

8.

M: You wear a seatbelt even for short distances?

W: Well, you can't be too careful.

M: That's for sure. Besides, who'd want to get a fine for not wearing one?

W: It's getting into accidents I'm afraid of.

9.

W: Has Helen paid back the money she owes us?

M: She asked for more time and I gave it to her.

W: If things were done my way, we'd have our cash.

10.

W: You wanna check out the new shopping mall downtown? I'm free today ... I mean this afternoon.

M: Yeah, but I'm kinda tied up. But if it were tomorrow...

W: Say no more! It's a date.

11.

W: So is it gonna be Florida or Hawaii?

M: Well, Florida is a lot closer and Hawaii's so expensive.

W: Yeah, and it doesn't really matter 'cause both have a lot of sun and beautiful beaches.

M: So Hawaii can wait.

12.

M: You phoned Chris, right?

W: Yeah, but I left him some voice mail.

M: I hope he returns our call.

W: He will once he hears my message.

13.

M: Mark was here looking for you this morning.

W: What d'ya know? I decide to be away one morning and I get visitors.

M: He said he'll come by again though 'cause he needed to see you about something.

14.

M: What do I need to do to become a member of the photography club?

W: Nothing, really. As long as you have a good camera and you can handle the club fees, you're free to join.

15.

W: Do you have much more work to do?

M: I have plenty, but we may as well pack everything in. We're both exhausted.

W: Yeah. I was hoping we'd finish everything by today, but, hey, we both deserve a rest.

Part 2

Example:

Have you heard the news about that new job I've been offered?

16. Have you made sure you have everything 'cause last time you made me turn back?

17. Wasn't that movie a total waste of time to watch?

18. Why did you get a pair of sunglasses just like mine and not something different?

19. Does Anne expect other people to do her work for her?

20. Who's it up to whether we get a new computer for the staff room or not?

21. Isn't that jacket you're wearing a bit too casual for today's event?

22. How come you didn't bring your husband with you like you did last time?

23. Do you think you can give me some change? I want to get a Coke from the vending machine.

24. I want to have a word with you. Do you have a minute?

25. Did you finally book our flight online or did you go to the travel agent?

26. Do you mind moving your briefcase 'cause someone might trip over it the way you've placed it?

27. I have no idea where Steve is. Have you tried reaching him on his cell phone?

28. Helen seems to be preoccupied with something. I said good morning as I always do and she just ignored me!

29. How didya know Mary was gonna quit?

30. Can you text me when you're done so I can come to pick you up?

31. I can't believe that you have so many things to attend to this week.

32. Is it okay if we skip this chapter and move on to the next one?

33. How could you have allowed your car insurance to lapse?

34. Don't you feel exhausted after such a lengthy trip? I know I would.

35. What's the company policy about sending and receiving personal email messages at the office?

Part 3

SEGMENT 1

Announcer: Getting my kids to read is something I've never accomplished. They'd rather watch TV, play computer games or surf the internet on their phones. But according to Mary Brown's report, perhaps I should start trying a little harder since extensive reading is more than just a way to spend your leisure.

Reporter: Neither educators nor parents have managed to solve the problem of getting kids to increase their extracurricular reading. It seems the problem, far from being solved, is actually getting worse. In reading literacy examinations all over the world, results are showing the typical 13 to 15-year-old is actually reading less compared with similar results from ten years ago. One international survey shows that only 20 percent of 15-year-olds, on average, do any type of extensive reading — that means reading fiction or non-fiction books. In most countries, only about 5 percent of teenagers have optimal reading abilities. I spoke with Professor Peter Kramer, from our local Teachers College, who explained why this is a serious problem. 36.

Expert: Unfortunately, the figures you give are quite accurate. Not only are kids not reading, but trends are not at all encouraging, which is why we have to start looking for solutions, otherwise there will be a time when people will be reading nothing at all. Listeners may wonder why reading is so important. Obviously, the more a young person reads the better he or she will do at school. But there are other interesting correlations. For instance, it's been found that people who read a lot tend to have a higher income. Social and health problems like alcoholism, substance abuse, mental illness and obesity are lower among people who are readers. So reading is important in the long run for our very livelihood! It's never too early to get your kids to adopt reading as a lifestyle since even 18-month-old babies can make connections between sounds, letters, pictures and meaning. Read to your child in a relaxed voice and choose a time during the day when you and your child can relax and unwind. This doesn't necessarily have to be bedtime either. Whatever time you choose, make sure it becomes part of your daily schedule. 37.

Reporter: Reading becomes a habit for our kids as they grow up when we, as parents, read to them on a regular basis and they learn to associate reading with being relaxed and comfortable. This is at home. But surely schools also bear some of the responsibility. Of course a lot can and should be done at school. Teachers should set aside an hour a week, preferably some time on Friday, which will be the book hour. It will be the hour that students can freely read or talk about what they're reading with classmates and their teachers. In this way, teens will start influencing one another — it will be a sort of peer thing. Let's not forget how much children and teenagers are influenced by their friends. We tend to remember that teens influence one another when we think of bad habits like smoking or drinking. However, peer pressure can exert a positive influence on someone in so many 38.

- ways, one of which is reading. Another interesting trend that generates reading is getting kids to download ebooks. In one illuminating experiment, one group of 30 16-year-olds were given a popular novel to read in its conventional paper-based form. Another group of the same size were given the same novel in a digital format which they were asked to read on a computer tablet. Each group had two weeks to finish the book. Of the first group, the one that read the conventional novel, 8 completed the book within the two weeks. With the second group though, the one that read the ebook, 17 — which is more than half — had read it within the two weeks. I think the results speak for themselves.

Reporter: So if kids are to start reading more it has to become an enjoyable habit for them as quickly as possible. But perhaps getting a device to read books in a digital format might also help.

36. What problem seems to be getting worse?
37. What conclusion can we draw from the program?
38. What advice does the expert give to parents?
39. What does the expert mean when he says, "...the results speak for themselves"?
40. What does the expert apparently believe?

SEGMENT 2

Announcer: There are numerous animal species whose only enemy is man. One such species is the majestic rhinoceros, which was so plentiful throughout Africa until the 1980s that some herds had over a thousand animals. But the rhino has now all but disappeared. Reporter Jim Smith is here to tell us more about this sad situation.

Reporter: Until sixty years ago, hundreds of thousands of rhinos were roaming all over sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. There are five major rhinoceros species, of which the white Rhino, found in southern Africa has the healthiest numbers, with almost 14,000 animals in the wild. But the four other rhino species are not doing well. In most parts of Africa and Asia, the rhino is extinct. There are only 275 Sumatran Rhinoceroses left in the wild.

- As for the Asian Rhino, once common throughout India and Pakistan, there are fewer than 60 animals left in captivity. Rhinos are disappearing due to a relatively small, although admittedly important part of their body. Environmentalist Anna Jenkins has more to say about the rhino.
41. **Expert:** It's a shame that this majestic animal is disappearing for one and only reason, and it's not for its meat. Poachers are after its horn. I can never get over seeing a dead carcass of a healthy rhino with its horn hacked off. It's truly brutal. When dried out and ground into a powder, horns retail for up to \$15,000 a kilo in the Orient, where they're used for medicinal purposes. The Chinese believe that rhino horn powder is a pain killer, especially for people suffering from migraines. However, no one has ever conducted experiments to bear out such claims. Most experts agree that they're false. Nevertheless, this false belief is fueling an ever-growing demand.
 43. **Reporter:** Poachers today use high-powered automatic weapons. They also use night-vision goggles, which allow them to hunt at night with virtual impunity. Poachers have much better equipment than park rangers. No animal is difficult to hunt and kill anymore. This is why poachers are so successful and large animals in general are disappearing so rapidly. As for the rhino, it is actually quite easy to hunt and

- kill because, unlike other animals, it has no instinctive fear of predators. So when it sees a poacher it doesn't flee, like other mammals, but it approaches out of curiosity. It literally walks into the poachers' line of fire, making it an easy target. Another sad thing is that it seems impossible to convince end-users to change their habits and beliefs regarding the therapeutic value of rhino horn powder. As for deterring poachers in Africa, this has proven unsuccessful since they are driven by the need to feed themselves and their families. For example, money from one rhino horn will feed a family of six for two or three months. Poachers kill rhinos to get food. According to some estimates, the trade in rhino horns is worth over 10 million dollars a year, most of which is pocketed by traders. It's so lucrative, that conservationists reluctantly admit that the only way to save the rhino is to legalize the trade in its horn. By this I mean that rhinos should be caught and put into a corral like any other cattle. Then vets should remove horns surgically, after which the hornless animal will be again released into the wild. It's true that the mutilated animals, especially males, might not be able to compete with other males during mating season without their horns. But at least they won't be targeted by poachers. And since the trade will be legal, most of the revenue being generated will help African governments get much needed cash.

Reporter: The suggestion to remove horns from rhinos is no panacea. For instance, there are fears that male rhinos will refuse to mate if they are hornless, which will not lead to an increase in rhino numbers. But then again, hornless rhinos may be better than no rhinos at all.

41. According to the speaker, why is the rhino disappearing?
42. What seems to be a great disadvantage for the rhino?
43. According to the information, what seems true about modern-day poachers?
44. What would be one benefit if the trade in rhino horns were made legal?
45. Why might someone disagree with the suggestion to surgically remove rhino horns?

SEGMENT 3

Announcer: Some of the most unsightly features of countryside the world-over are the countless pylons and overhead cables that transfer electricity from power stations to our cities and factories. But they may be a thing of the past in the next few decades. Reporter Mary Brown is here to describe a method of transferring electricity without cables.

Reporter: Pylons and cables are not only ugly, they are also impractical when it comes to getting electricity to extremely remote areas. Until recently, small islands or mountainous regions could rely only on generators or solar panels. But, solar panels cannot provide all the power a modern home needs. As for generators, they need to be powered by fuel, so they are noisy and they cause air pollution. The National Space Center of France has been experimenting with a different way to convey power using microwaves. What's innovative about this technology is that it does away with pylons and cables completely. With me is Professor Ian Dryer, who can explain how the whole system works.

- Expert:** First of all, the technology isn't really new. As far back as 1820, French inventor André-Marie Ampère discovered that electrical currents create magnetic fields. And then a few decades later it was found that these magnetic fields could be harnessed for energy. And Croatian genius Nicolai Tesla patented a wireless transmission system

- in 1897. The system we're developing exploits the same technology used in the microwave oven, which was invented in the 1940s. The electric power is sent to a special receiving station that converts the direct current electricity into
47. microwaves. The electricity is converted by a device known as a magnetron. After the magnetron changes the electricity into microwaves, they are beamed through a network of aerials and into a special adapting unit that reconverts the microwaves into electricity again. Because the microwaves of this system are at a different frequency than those in our ovens, there is no danger that they will cause any injury. For the time being, though, it is far from feasible to apply the new microwave technology in all situations.

Reporter: So this technology is promising, but, as with a lot of technologies its cost will have to come down before we can start using it. Does this mean it can't really be applied anywhere for the time being? And when do you foresee its broader use?

48. **Expert:** There are places in the world where it's currently being applied. There's a system for the French-administered island of Reunion, located in the middle of the Indian Ocean. And in a recent experiment, power was distributed to the islands of Hawaii from a microwave power station on Maui, location of the island state's highest point. Within a decade or two, there are hopes that the technology can be combined with conventional grids so that environmentally sensitive areas such as forests or heritage sites can be free of pylons and cables. It is quite possible that, by 2060 or 2070, we will have cableless cities where each building will have its own system which will receive electricity wirelessly. However, in its current state, wireless transmission of electricity has two great disadvantages. The first regards efficiency. About 20 to 30 percent of the power is lost during the transfer, no matter what technology is used. Once we've managed to minimize this loss, then we will have greater application. The other disadvantage is there are no industry standards. We've just discussed the use of microwaves to transfer power. There are however three or four other technologies involving wireless power transmission. One is not really compatible with the other. So there's still no consensus as to which technology will be the dominant one.
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Reporter: So I guess we'll be seeing pylons and power lines for some time to come. But at least our grandchildren will be able to enjoy a drive in the country without anything to spoil the view.

46. What is one disadvantage of wireless power transmission?
 47. What does the magnetron do?
 48. Who will see the most immediate benefits of the new technology?
 49. What can we conclude regarding the technology behind wireless power transmission?
 50. When can we expect wireless power transmission to be widely applied?

PRACTICE TEST 6

LISTENING

Part 1

Example:

M: Mary and John should have come by now. I wonder what's keeping them?

W: It may seem as if they'll never get here, but they will. You know how Mary is when she's getting ready to go out.
M: I guess you're right. Besides, I can't think of one time they haven't been late.

1.

M: Your daughter was telling me the other day how she plans to move into her own apartment.

W: Not if I can help it. I told her she can do so when she can afford her own rent.

2.

W: You're a bit over-dressed for this occasion.

M: Yeah, but I was told to wear a shirt and tie.

W: Just take off your tie and you'll look casual enough. Or leave it on if you want to stand out!

3.

M: I almost had a traffic accident yesterday.

W: Really, what happened?

M: I was really stupid. I was trying to call someone on my phone and wasn't paying attention to my driving.

4.

M: Can I speak with Jim?

W: Sure, unless of course he's not in his office, in which case I couldn't tell you where he is.

M: Well I looked in his office so I guess I'll come by after lunch.

5.

W: Bill said he'd lend me a hand with my project.

M: And I suppose you took him seriously.

W: Well, I thought he was reliable.

M: I once thought that too.

6.

W: How's your new neighborhood?

M: At first I regretted moving there, mostly because we hardly knew any of the neighbors.

W: And now?

M: Oh, well, I couldn't live anywhere else!

7.

M: What did Professor Jones say about postponing tomorrow's exam?

W: She was thinking about it, but then decided to stick to her schedule.

M: Which means I haven't been doing all this studying for nothing!

8.

W: Have you been using the blowdryer 'cause it's broken.

M: It wasn't broken this morning when I dried my hair.

W: Well it is now. Sure you didn't drop it?

9.

M: Did you finally get that job you applied for?

W: I was told there were no openings for the time being but that they'd give me a call. But it doesn't look too promising.

10.

M: I turned down this offer to go to Italy with a friend of mine.

W: You did! Well I wouldn't've.

M: Yeah, and to think I'd've paid only for my air fare!

11.

W: Weren't we supposed to have that meeting yesterday?

M: You obviously didn't read my email about doing it tomorrow some time.

W: But tomorrow's impossible for me.

12.

W: I've been dialling Paul, but I can't get through. His line's constantly busy.

M: You know Paul. When he's on the phone he talks for hours! Call him later or send him an email.

13.

M: Can I register for any course I like?

W: Not exactly. There are plenty of openings in our evening program, but there are no vacancies in the morning or afternoon I'm afraid.

14.

W: When grocery shopping I closely read the labels of whatever I get.

M: Yeah, you can't be too careful when you buy stuff at the supermarket.

W: I'm especially wary about GM foods.

M: Yeah, and unfortunately even fresh produce may have been genetically modified.

15.

M: I found the movie so thrilling. I mean the action kept me glued to my seat.

W: Is that so? Well, I'm relieved it's over. In fact, I wish I hadn't listened to you and come. I had better things to do!

Part 2

Example:

Have you heard the news about that new job I've been offered?

16. Since you don't feel so well, why don't you take the rest of the day off and go home?

17. Do you think we'll have to put up with this much longer?

18. When you see the cleaning staff, could you tell them to leave my things as they are?

19. I think you'll agree when I say those remarks you made were uncalled for.

20. D'ya ever find out what Helen did with your mobile phone?

21. I'm off for lunch. Care to join me?

22. Are you sure you haven't misplaced your laptop?

23. Why have you been avoiding me 'cause I've been meaning to talk to you?

24. I don't know where you find the time to work out so regularly.

25. Didn't you say something about picking me up after school?

26. Is that real leather you're wearing or fake?

27. Sorry, but what was it that you wanted to talk to me about that was so urgent?

28. How much longer is he going to take to finish his lecture?

29. What are you gonna do if Mary doesn't pay you back?

30. Is George as good at golf as most people say he is?

31. How do you know it's time to wake up in the morning without an alarm clock?

32. How many people do you expect will be attending the seminar?

33. Why are you reading aloud? Can't you read to yourself?

34. Will you have found something to buy Bill for his birthday in time for his party?

35. How do you expect to get front row seats at the concert if you don't call to make reservations?

Part 3

SEGMENT 1

Announcer: One of the most special days of the year is Mother's Day. It's one of the few days that is celebrated in most countries around the world, breaking all cultural barriers. In fact, it's such an important day that in some countries it's become an official holiday. Mary Brown is here to tell us more about Mother's Day. 36.

Reporter: As you've mentioned, Mother's Day is one of the most widely celebrated holidays in the world since it's observed in both the east and the west. It's celebrated in most places including North America and Europe, on the second Sunday of May, but a few other countries celebrate their own Mother's Day at different times during the year. For such a prominent day, its beginnings were quite humble and quite religious. Historian Patrick Watson, who specializes in holidays, is here to tell us about Mother's Day. 37.

Expert: Mother's Day actually has a rather long history stretching back over two thousand years. A sort of Mother's Day was celebrated originally by the ancient Greeks, who had a special day for their mothers by honoring Rhea, considered mother of the gods, every spring. The Romans also had a similar celebration, but their goddess was known as Cybele. Most early civilizations associated motherhood with the spring and with some sort of divinity. For example, the early Christians associated their worship of the Virgin Mary with motherhood. A type of Mother's Day was set aside in 17th century England. It was called Mothering Sunday and it always took place on the fourth Sunday before Easter. Because a lot of people worked as servants for wealthy aristocrats at that time and had to live great distances from their homes, they were given the day off on Mothering Sunday to visit their families and mothers. The custom was to bring a mothering cake, which made these visits even more enjoyable. 37.

Reporter: So I guess you're talking about how maternity was celebrated through the ages. But how did Mother's Day, as we know it, come about? When did it become the secular holiday it is today?

Expert: A sort of secular Mother's Day began in the US in the 1880s, when a simple schoolteacher named Anna Reeves Jarvis wanted to set aside a special day to raise awareness of the poor and sick in her area of West Virginia. Anna Reeves Jarvis was shocked that women with children were the most frequent victims of poverty and she wanted government to take action to combat this problem. By the 1890s, she started campaigning to have a Mother's Day made official. Anna Reeves Jarvis was also one of the first people to campaign for women's rights and the rights of the poor. When Anna Reeves Jarvis died in 1905, her daughter, Anna Marie Jarvis, continued with her mother's work. She wrote letters to legislators and campaigned tirelessly until she achieved her goal. Mother's Day became an official holiday in the US on May 8th, 1914 and has been celebrated since then on the second Sunday in May. However, much like so many other special days, Mother's Day quickly became highly commercialized. It became associated with expensive gifts, chocolates, and flowers. This commercialization had become so rampant by the early 1920s that Anna Marie Jarvis herself started protesting against it. In fact, Anna Marie Jarvis 38. 40. 39.

39. became so disillusioned by what Mother's Day had become that, in 1948, shortly before her death, she expressed regret that she had started it.

Reporter: It's true that Mother's Day is a highly commercialized holiday. In fact, the week before Mother's Day in the US, consumers spend almost as much on gifts as they do the week before Christmas. More phone calls are made on Mother's Day than on any other day of the year. It's a sad thought that some people think of their mothers only on that particular day. Mother's Day, as we know it, is clearly not the type of holiday Jarvis had in mind!

36. What point is emphasized in the program?
 37. What is one thing early civilizations had in common?
 38. What was Anna Reeves Jarvis concerned about?
 39. How did Anna Marie Jarvis finally feel about Mother's Day?
 40. What statement is true based on information from the program?

SEGMENT 2

Announcer: You're driving down the street when all of a sudden your cell phone rings. Because you're responsible, you take the call using your hands-free device, keeping both hands on the wheel. But is this still safe? There is growing concern that any cell phone use while driving is best avoided. John Smith Reports.

- Reporter:** Cell phones have been with us for over 20 years now. Despite their convenience, there are situations in which their use should be discouraged. One of these situations is driving. Although everyone will agree that texting while driving is undeniably hazardous, few people realize how dangerous simply talking on a cell phone while driving can be, even when you're using a hands-free device. For instance, our reaction time is 6 times slower when we're driving while using a cell phone with a hands-free device. But here's Kate Dawson, a researcher from the National Safety Council, with information that will make you think twice before using your phone while driving.
42. driving is undeniably hazardous, few people realize how dangerous simply talking on a cell phone while driving can be, even when you're using a hands-free device. For instance, our reaction time is 6 times slower when we're driving while using a cell phone with a hands-free device. But here's Kate Dawson, a researcher from the National Safety Council, with information that will make you think twice before using your phone while driving.

- Expert:** I'm glad we're starting with one of the worst myths regarding cell phone use and driving. The common belief is that when we use a hands-free device, thereby keeping both hands on the wheel, we can safely drive and talk on our phone. Research results are proving how far from the truth this is. In a recent experiment involving 20-year-olds, it was established that they have a reaction time of a 70-year-old when driving while using their phones. Another study from the Harvard Center of Risk Analysis estimates that cell phone use while driving contributes to 6 percent of US crashes, which means 636,000 crashes, 330,000 injuries, 12,000 serious injuries and 2,600 deaths each year. So now there is documented proof that any cell phone use while driving
44. leads to accidents. And a 2010 study by scientists with the University of Utah found that speaking on your cell phone results in poorer driving performance than being legally drunk.

41. **Reporter:** So what you're saying then is that driving while speaking on a cell phone is no different from driving while under the influence of alcohol. How does cell phone use incapacitate us from driving?

42. **Reporter:** When speaking to someone on our cell phone, even with both hands on the wheel, our mind is concentrating

on the person we're involved with. In a study at Western Washington University, a team of psychologists designed an experiment performed in the university's large central square. The researchers arranged for a purple-and-yellow-clad clown, with a bright nose, to ride a unicycle around an area where many students gathered. The scientists used trained observers working in pairs to watch three groups of walkers — those talking on a cell phone while walking, those walking alone, and those walking in pairs. After watching the walkers go past the clown's area, where he was highly visible, the observers spoke with the walkers and asked each of them the question: "Did you see the clown?" Only 25 percent of the cell phone users said they had. 50 percent of those walking alone noticed the clown. More than 70 percent of those walking in pairs said they saw the clown. It was found that individuals walking while talking on a phone displayed what researchers called inattentive blindness to a real-world situation. They were paying attention to their call at the expense of everything else going on around them in their immediate environment. When this happens while someone is driving, the consequences can be devastating.

43. It was found that individuals walking while talking on a phone displayed what researchers called inattentive blindness to a real-world situation. They were paying attention to their call at the expense of everything else going on around them in their immediate environment. When this happens while someone is driving, the consequences can be devastating.

Reporter: So the message is clear. Just as you must never drive while under the influence of alcohol, it's best to ignore your cell phone when you're in the driver's seat. And perhaps lawmakers should consider making cell phone use while driving an offense like drunk driving.

45. And perhaps lawmakers should consider making cell phone use while driving an offense like drunk driving.

41. What conclusion can be drawn from the program?
 42. What information is the talk apparently emphasizing?
 43. What does the "clown" experiment seem to prove?
 44. What is one serious consequence of using a cell phone while driving?
 45. Which statement would the speakers probably agree with?

SEGMENT 3

Announcer: As water resources are stretched to the limit, public agencies and private companies are looking for alternative sources of water. One way to satisfy our needs is to build desalination plants. But, as reporter John Smith has found out, they are not without controversy.

46. One way to satisfy our needs is to build desalination plants. But, as reporter John Smith has found out, they are not without controversy.

Reporter: In our world of over 7 billion people, it's sad to think that over a billion of us do not have access to safe fresh water. And projections for the future are far from bright. According to a recent World Bank report, by 2025, 4 billion people, or half of humanity by that time, will be living under conditions of severe water stress. Some countries are battling the specter of water shortages by turning to desalination. Peter Osborne, who represents a major desalination company, is here to describe the process and its benefits.

Expert 1: Desalination basically involves removing salt and other minerals from water so that it can become potable. There are different ways this can be accomplished, each of which admittedly requires a lot of energy. But the benefits of desalination are numerous. People who would otherwise be suffering severe water stress can enjoy an abundant supply of fresh water. Because it costs so much to transport water over great distances, building a desalination plant is a more cost-efficient alternative, especially for coastal areas. After all, coastal regions facing severe water shortages can get abundant fresh water from nearby seas and oceans. There are over 1500 desalination plants currently operating in scores of countries. The main concern is that desalination

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47. plants require a tremendous amount of energy, but this issue is being addressed with the potential adoption of solar power and nuclear energy.
It is hoped that, within the foreseeable future, we will have desalination plants that use the least amount of energy and produce a limitless supply of fresh water for domestic, agricultural, and industrial needs.

49. **Reporter:** Peter Osborne does sound upbeat. But there is another side to this issue. Environmentalist Jasmine Stein argues that desalination is no panacea. On the contrary, she thinks it creates a new set of problems.

Expert 2: I want to stress that desalination is an outrageously expensive process. While extracting, transporting, and storing fresh water from ground sources costs about ten cents per cubic meter, the cost of producing water through desalination is over fifty cents per cubic meter. In addition, desalination removes salt and minerals from water, but it does not remove pollutants. Coastal cities that dump waste water into the seas around them cannot be

49. helped by a desalination plant. Then there is the problem of disposing the salt and minerals removed from the seawater. Coastal areas where these substances are dumped have such increased salinity that water temperatures rise and sealife vanishes. In other words, the wastes from desalination result in the creation of dead zones. Despite projections that future desalination plants will require less energy, the current technology is such that they demand enormous amounts of energy. This is why desalination plants
49. produce greenhouse gases. So desalination plants are a major contributor to water and air pollution. If we want to prevent massive water shortages, we should be focusing on better water management. Conserving and recycling water, stopping pollutants from contaminating fresh water sources, and similar initiatives are cheaper and more effective than building desalination plants.

Reporter: As with all debates, the one revolving around desalination plants is difficult to resolve. One thing is certain,
50. however. The problem of there not being enough water for the Earth's inhabitants will only get worse unless action is taken immediately. Time is not on our side.

46. What issue is the program investigating?
47. Which statement would both experts agree with?
48. What seems to be the main advantage of desalination plants?
49. What seems to be a serious disadvantage of desalination plants?
50. What message is the program apparently conveying?

PRACTICE TEST 7

LISTENING

Part 1

Example:

M: Mary and John should have come by now. I wonder what's keeping them?
W: It may seem as if they'll never get here, but they will. You know how Mary is when she's getting ready to go out.
M: I guess you're right. Besides, I can't think of one time they haven't been late.

1.
M: Read many books so far this year?
W: To be honest, I kinda lost count, 'cause I go through a lot of ebooks on my tablet.
M: What? You no longer read regular books?
W: Yeah, but admittedly not that many.
2.
M: I can't say when I've had a nicer time.
W: Yeah, me neither.
M: I can hardly wait to come here again.
W: You said it!
3.
M: I've been having second thoughts about buying that motorcycle.
W: Really? But your heart was so set on it.
M: I know, but I've reconsidered. Maybe I'd be better off spending my money on a car.
4.
W: What was the wedding reception like?
M: It was a quiet get-together. Just relatives and a few close friends.
W: I'd've thought they'd have a lot of guests.
M: Well, it did seem like there were a lot of people 'cause the room wasn't very big.
5.
M: What did he say his name was?
W: Gee, I missed it. Imagine!
M: And I did too! Aren't we great when it comes to paying attention?
6.
M: Do you wanna break for lunch, or are ya gonna work a bit more?
W: I may as well have a bite to eat. I can finish this later.
M: We won't take longer than twenty minutes.
7.
W: Bill shouldn't've said those things to Cathy.
M: In her place, I'd never've forgiven him. How she didn't lose her temper is beyond me.
W: But you know Cathy! She has such a big heart! And you'll rarely see her angry.
8.
W: Something's burning. Sure you turned off the oven?
M: Didn't you go into the kitchen last?
W: Which means the cake's been burned.
9.
M: I have a watch that's a lot more expensive than the one you're wearing.
W: Aren't appearances misleading. My watch only looks expensive. Actually I paid next to nothing for it.
10.
M: Didn't you say you'd text me to let me know what time to expect you?
W: Sorry, but I had forgotten to recharge my phone. The battery went dead.
M: You could've used somebody else's phone!
11.
M: What did Professor Lawrence's lecture cover?

W: To be honest, I didn't quite follow it because my mind was elsewhere.

M: What if he had asked you any questions?

12.

M: Jane's always singing when she works.

W: Yeah, and it's a habit that gets on everyone's nerves.

M: I guess she thinks she has a nice voice.

W: If she thinks that then she's the only one.

13.

M: I have this dictionary app on my cell, so I can always look up words whenever there's a need.

W: Hey, that's pretty cool. Is it free or did you have to pay for it?

M: I paid a bit, but it's a whole lot cheaper than buying a regular dictionary at a bookstore.

W: I'm gonna download it too, then.

14.

M: Oh, no! I erased my holiday photos from my hard drive before I could get them printed.

W: You should've saved them someplace else, like on a memory stick.

M: I know, and that's what I usually do.

W: Too bad, 'cause I was really hoping you'd be showing them to me.

15.

M: We need to go over these figures again because they don't pan out.

W: What do you mean?

M: There's a discrepancy between how much we currently have deposited in our account and how much there should be.

W: We could always download a history of all our transactions.

Part 2

Example:

Have you heard the news about that new job I've been offered?

16. Did Harry show up for your date or did he stand you up again?

17. Has Peter gotten back to you yet or are you still waiting for his reply?

18. Instead of watching the movie on TV why don't we watch it on my computer?

19. Could you please tell me where I might get this prescription filled?

20. Do you think you can get me a pair of jeans if I give you the money?

21. Isn't it cheaper to book tickets on-line than it is to go to a travel agent?

22. Could you recommend a site where I could download films from the 40s and 50s?

23. Can you tell me what's wrong over the phone?

24. I can't count the times you've said you're gonna quit smoking.

25. Do you know anyone noisier than those neighbors of ours?

26. Did you finally take them up on their offer?

27. How regularly would you say you use public transportation?

28. Why don't you take down this phone number?

29. Do you always have to leave your office in such a mess?

30. Wouldn't it be nice if we could leave right now?

31. You were really taken in by John's lies, weren't you?

32. Do you usually take this long to drive here?

33. How is it that you're planning to go to Japan?

34. Will you ask Mary about whether or not that photocopier is working?

35. Don't tell me that you've been up all night working.

Part 3

SEGMENT 1

Announcer: Most people you ask will tell you that food at fast food restaurants may be high on taste, but it is really low when it comes to nutritional value. Reporter Jim Smith explores this issue, and what he's found may surprise some of our listeners. It seems that fast food may unnecessarily be getting a bad rap.

Reporter: Obesity is a problem of our times. In some places, up to 25 percent of adults are obese. Of the many culprits blamed for what is being called an epidemic, we find fast food restaurants topping the list. Rich in fat, sugar, and salt, food at such establishments does not appear to be healthy. But should fast food be demonized? We explore this issue from two opposing sides. 36. First, we meet with George Sumter, chief dietician for our city's hospitals. Then we'll talk with Samantha Kostas, owner and operator of five fast food restaurants in our area. 38.

Expert: Where can I begin, since I have so much against fast food, and generally all sorts of commercially available food? The best example I can use is the documentary, "Supersize Me," in which a journalist consumed nothing but items off a fast food restaurant menu for all his meals for a month. At the end of his experiment, in which he was his own guinea pig, he had gained over 15 kilos, his cholesterol level had gone through the roof, and he had succumbed to depression. 39. Being overweight, having high cholesterol, with all its concomitant complications, and being depressed are all problems characteristic of today. I mean, so many people face these problems because they indulge in the poor quality food from such establishments.

Reporter: After listening to that pretty vocal attack, I'd like to turn to Samantha, who is a local entrepreneur. Samantha is a franchisee responsible for five restaurants belonging to a well-known chain. As you would expect, she has a different view of the problem.

Expert: As a mother, I'm concerned my kids have a proper diet. Of course we eat at my restaurants. The food served there is far from junk. Our burgers are one-hundred percent beef and all ingredients, from potatoes to sauces, are carefully selected. And it's not all fried or grilled foods, since we also offer salads which, by the way, come from locally grown produce. If some of our customers overdo it, is it our fault? The answer's obvious. The problem with obesity is not the type of food people consume, but the quantity. If someone eats, exclusively, large quantities of completely organic food, they still run the risk of gaining unwanted weight. If you're careful with quantities, no matter what and where you eat, you won't have a problem. It's that simple. There's mention of the documentary, "Supersize Me," which I found outrageous because the protagonist wasn't simply eating. He was binging on extra large quantities of everything. He was also intentionally ordering immense quantities of high-fat food for 37.

each one of his meals. Had he eaten home-cooked meals with the same fat content and sugar content, and the same caloric intake, the end result would've been no different. He still would've put himself on the road to obesity and exposed himself to all the dire consequences of an unhealthy diet.

37. **Reporter:** So before blaming fast food restaurants for our obesity epidemic, perhaps we should consider our society's more general dietary patterns. In a nutshell, over-eating is a problem, even when it involves eating meals at home that include otherwise healthy and organic ingredients.
40.
36. What debate is the program trying to resolve?
37. Which statement would both experts agree with regarding the documentary, "Supersize Me" and its protagonist?
38. How is the program organized?
39. What seems to be the purpose of the documentary, "Supersize Me"?
40. What does the reporter apparently conclude?

SEGMENT 2

Announcer: The number of gun-related deaths tends to be high in the US when compared with other developed countries. The situation among teenagers is frightening. Over 9 million teenagers are estimated to have access to a gun. Close to a million have admitted to having come to school armed. Reporter John Smith is here with some more very disturbing statistics.

Reporter: Every day in the US, almost 20 children are shot dead and scores are wounded. That's over 7,000 children under the age of 19 killed annually. About ten percent of teens say they've been shot at at least once. Over 60 percent claim they could get a handgun if they needed one. Illegal handguns can be bought for as little as fifty dollars.

42. On average 88 children a week are expelled from school for carrying a firearm. Serial offenders are removed from school permanently. The great question is why. Why do young people come to school armed? Chief Anne O'Flynn, head of our city police force is here to give us some answers.
43. **Expert:** Kids carry guns to school for many reasons. For some kids, a gun is a status symbol. They do it to show off. Others carry a firearm because they belong to a gang that requires it. As is the case with all vicious circles, many kids want to have a gun on them to feel safe, since so many other kids are armed around them. Ironically, kids packing a gun are fifty percent more likely to be shot than kids who are unarmed. Beleaguered schools have tried a variety of measures to curb the problem. Some school administrators have installed metal detectors like the ones at airports. When metal detectors were first installed there was progress in the reduction of gun possession. But schools have stopped using them on a daily basis because they aren't practical. It's hard to put thousands of students through metal detectors every day. Metal detectors are used only once or twice a month. On days they're not on, guns get through.

Reporter: With so many guns out there, with it being so easy to get a handgun, it seems that there is no way to stop this problem. And placing metal detectors in schools is well, a bit over the top, don't you think?

Expert: Yes, it is. Another way to deter kids from bringing weapons is, I'll admit, equally questionable. It's to have police officers doing spot checks in school corridors. If students face

the likelihood of being searched, and if found to be armed, of being charged for the illegal possession of a firearm, they may think twice. But in my view, deterrence can only go so far. I think we should take two steps to stop this scourge. After all, guns claim the lives of more teens than traffic accidents. Firstly, there should be stricter gun-control laws. The ideal would be a complete ban on handguns. Secondly, there should be a greater effort to make kids understand how dangerous guns are. Just as there are concerted efforts to prevent kids from smoking or taking drugs, likewise there should be a campaign to make teenagers understand that having a gun is far from cool.

44.

44.

Reporter: Because gun-control laws aren't changing any time soon, we must stress the importance of parents becoming more responsible with the firearms they keep at home. Most firearm mishaps involving kids would never have occurred if parents had kept their guns safely locked away. Thousands of teens and children are injured or killed in their own homes. Unfortunately, kids learn to be careless with guns from parents.

45.

41. What problem is the program investigating?
42. What seems to happen when students are discovered at school with guns?
43. Why is it that young people bring guns to school?
44. What seems to be the best permanent solution regarding the problem of handguns and teens?
45. According to the information, who is mostly responsible for preventing young people from using handguns?

SEGMENT 3

Announcer: If you're a smoker who's been trying unsuccessfully to quit, or an ex-smoker who still craves for a cigarette from time to time then today's program will help you feel less guilty. It seems that, once someone starts smoking, giving up may be more challenging than we think. Reporter Mary Brown explains.

Reporter: The reason smoking is a difficult habit to break is because smokers become nicotine addicts, and like all addicts it is hard for them to free themselves from their addiction. But how addictive is nicotine? Professor Nelson Obutu from International Health Watch is here to give us some interesting comparisons.

46.

Expert: Personally, I put nicotine on the same list as other highly addictive drugs such as heroin, crack, alcohol, and cocaine. Smoking is no longer seen as a very nasty habit to be socially disapproved of. It is an addiction. It's not as destructive as other addictions. A person can smoke and still function. Heroin or crack completely incapacitate us. In addition, heroin, crack and other narcotics are much more toxic than nicotine and therefore cause more serious immediate health problems. Alcohol kills far more people than any other addictive substance. Nevertheless, just as it is difficult for someone to free himself from an addiction to a drug, likewise it is difficult to stop smoking, or to stop oneself from needing an intake of nicotine. And like all addictions, trying to quit smoking results in often severe withdrawal symptoms like migraines, nausea, and cramps. The withdrawal symptoms are so unbearable that smokers continue their habit to avoid this pain. In fact, far from enjoying it, smokers, like all addicts, generally hate smoking.

47.

Reporter: Just how powerful is nicotine addiction compared

to other drugs? And if nicotine addiction is so strong, why is it that some people, even those who have been long-term smokers, manage to quit?

49. **Expert:** To show how powerful the addiction to nicotine is, I want to share the results of a survey we conducted a few months ago. We questioned several thousand people who had entered a rehabilitation program five years ago to stop themselves from taking a particular drug. We spoke with heroin addicts, crack addicts, cocaine users, alcoholics, and smokers. Of the people we questioned, 40 percent of cocaine users started their habit within five years after trying to quit. The percentage of people who started using heroin again was 55 percent. About 65 percent
49. of reformed alcoholics started drinking again. For people who recommenced smoking within five years of quitting the figure was an astounding 75 percent. This means if someone starts smoking and then stops, there is a very great likelihood that this person will eventually start again. Only crack, as a narcotic, is more addictive than nicotine, since almost all people who start using crack never free themselves from their addiction. Crack also claims more lives compared to other drugs. Why do some manage to quit? It does in fact boil down to willpower. Despite different suggestions and approaches, the only way to kick any addiction is cold turkey. It may cause painful withdrawal symptoms, but I'm afraid there is no other way.
48. themselves from their addiction. Crack also claims more lives compared to other drugs. Why do some manage to quit? It does in fact boil down to willpower. Despite different suggestions and approaches, the only way to kick any addiction is cold turkey. It may cause painful withdrawal symptoms, but I'm afraid there is no other way.
50. **Reporter:** So smoking is more than an annoying habit. It's a serious addiction. Perhaps this is something young people, and especially adolescents, should bear in mind before they light up that first smoke!
46. According to the information, why do people continue smoking?
47. According to the expert, what is true about nicotine addiction?
48. According to the expert, which is the most fatal form of addiction?
49. Why does the speaker compare the different substances?
50. What conclusion is drawn at the end of the talk?

PRACTICE TEST 8

LISTENING

Part 1

Example:

- M:** Mary and John should have come by now. I wonder what's keeping them?
- W:** It may seem as if they'll never get here, but they will. You know how Mary is when she's getting ready to go out.
- M:** I guess you're right. Besides, I can't think of one time they haven't been late.

- 1.
- W:** Want a piece of this pizza? It's delicious!
- M:** I certainly would, but I feel so full already.
- W:** Suit yourself, but you don't know what you're missing.

- 2.
- M:** Looks as though we gotta take a taxi home.
- W:** Yeah, and they're so expensive.
- M:** If only there wasn't that bus strike. We could've taken the shuttle bus downtown.

- 3.
- M:** How about using a photo on the cover of our annual report?
- W:** Sounds great. What do you have in mind?
- M:** One is a photo of a busy office and the other choice is one of a forest.
- W:** Hmmm...well...go with the first one.
- 4.
- W:** How you managing with your back problem?
- M:** My doctor told me to take it easy for another week or so, but then that I'd be as active as before.
- W:** Great, 'cause we really miss you at the tennis club.
- 5.
- W:** I wouldn't mind stopping here. I mean, it looks decent enough. What dya say?
- M:** Well, we've been driving for so long and we're both hungry.
- 6.
- W:** Remember how we'd go on those weekend camping trips? I wish we could go again.
- M:** You know, in the beginning I didn't really like them that much, but now that we haven't gone for so long I do kinda miss them too.
- 7.
- M:** I just saw a guy walk out of the office who looked just like Bill. In fact, I almost thought it was him.
- W:** Oh, you must have seen Bill's twin. He's in town, visiting.
- 8.
- W:** Something smells kinda awful in this room. You've been smoking again, haven't you?
- M:** You know I quit smoking weeks ago.
- W:** Well, whatever it is, open a window and let some fresh air in.
- 9.
- W:** How about going for a walk?
- M:** Are you kidding? At this hour? You know how much I like walking, but not in the dark.
- W:** Yeah, but it's such a nice night.
- 10.
- M:** I'm really grateful for all your help.
- W:** I don't think I did anything special. In fact, there's a lot more I could've done.
- M:** Oh, no. You did more than enough.
- 11.
- W:** You, know, I don't think I've met anyone who's more clever than Jim.
- M:** I feel exactly the same way.
- 12.
- W:** Why don't we have a coffee and take it easy this afternoon?
- M:** Aren't you forgetting that big exam we have in two days? I think I'm gonna pass on your offer.
- W:** Aren't you a hard worker!
- 13.
- M:** When are you going to send me those packages? I was supposed to have them by now.
- W:** They're in the mail. You should be getting them any day.

14.
W: Pete and Mary never seem to get along. I'm surprised they even got married.
M: Yeah, but I think it's more Pete's fault than Mary's.
15.
M: I'm going to have to call off that dinner appointment we'd arranged for this evening.
W: It's no big deal. We can always have dinner together some time next week.

Part 2

Example:

Have you heard the news about that new job I've been offered?

16. How is it that I found all the computers on this morning when I entered the office?
 17. Are you finished downloading those videos yet, because I really want to watch them?
 18. Sorry I spoiled your plans by putting off that trip you were so looking forward to.
 19. Is that a new pair of shoes you're wearing?
 20. How is it that you're still here at this late hour?
 21. You've been in front of that computer screen for an awfully long time.
 22. How often is it that you and Mary manage to get out of the house?
 23. Paul's coming over later like he said he would, isn't he?
 24. Do you need any help or do you think you can handle everything alone?
 25. What are all these papers doing all over the floor?
 26. So, you're a journalist. I bet it's a really fascinating job.
 27. Don't you get tired of carrying around that computer tablet all day?
 28. Shouldn't you apologize to Peter for causing that disagreement between the two of you?
 29. Should I instal an anti-virus program on my cell phone if I'm going to be using it to surf the internet?
 30. You've been job-hunting for six months and you still haven't found anything worthwhile?
 31. Did you know there are a lot of people in the US whose native language is not English?
 32. Seeing that you're from a big city, what made you decide to move to a small town?
 33. Did you manage to save up enough money for that trip you were planning to go on?
 34. I know you've booked seats at that nice restaurant, but I'm not up to going out tonight.
 35. Is it true that you always leave your door unlocked during the day?

Part 3

SEGMENT 1

Announcer: It was once everyone's dream to leave their small towns and to head for the city. The small community was always seen as, well,...too small for anyone with dreams. Today, however, there's a new exodus, but the other way around, as more and more people are seeking to escape from the city and to return to small towns. Reporter Mary Brown is here to explain why.

Reporter: During the 1950s to the 1990s, the four decades in which the world's major cities really thrived, the countryside

started emptying in pretty well every country. For instance, the population of New York almost tripled from 1950 to 1990, 36. while that of Beijing nearly quadrupled. In 1950, 70 percent of the people in the UK lived in the countryside, while in 1990 only 25 percent did. Cities, of course, continue to grow, 37. especially in the developing world, attracting young people in search of opportunities. But the counter- current, in which people leave cities and head back to a smaller community, started during the 1990s. Most of the ex-urbanites are young 40. professionals with families in search of the quieter and more secure life that only smaller communities can offer. Sociology Professor Dennis Meyers is here to explain this trend.

Expert: This trend is interesting for two reasons. The first is that most people who leave small towns and move to cities are usually poor and semi-skilled workers who are single, while those who are leaving cities and moving to smaller 38. communities tend to be affluent professionals with children. And as these reasonably well-off people are leaving cities we come to the second reason that makes this trend interesting. Simply put, it's services. I'm talking about services that you could once find only in cities, but that were unimaginable in towns in the past. I'm talking about adequate schools, well-equipped hospitals, police protection, sanitation, sports facilities. Small and medium-size communities also offer more entertainment opportunities with movies, theaters, concert halls and the like.

Reporter: What about the role of the Internet and other media? I think they constitute a very important factor with regards to this trend. I mean, if you want to watch a movie, you no longer have to think about leaving your home to go to a theater or to rent a DVD.

Expert: Yes, the internet is an important factor, in the sense that you can stream any movie or TV show any time you want. But the media have played another role as well. I mean whenever there's a terrible crime, whenever there are reports 39. of severe social problems like divorce or drug abuse, all these terrible things are associated with cities. People think, "If I move to a small town, my kids and I will be safer and we'll have a cleaner and healthier life." But as with so many other things, the media blow things way out of proportion, since crime has gone down in most cities. And just as services have improved in small towns, they've also improved in cities. One more thing is new career opportunities for young professionals in smaller towns since numerous companies have head offices or major branches in or near small towns. Apple and Microsoft are just two such corporations. Mind you, most people moving to small towns have generally solved their professional worries.

Reporter: Information technology is just one more factor behind this trend. Young professionals can live and work in small towns because so many of their needs can be met through the Internet. Finally, public transportation and rail services in many countries have made it easy for people to get to cities quickly and easily whenever the need arises.

36. According to the information, what is true about the population of Beijing from 1950 to 1990?
 37. Why did people choose to leave smaller towns?
 38. What sort of person typically moves away from the city?
 39. According to the information, what are the media tending to emphasize?
 40. What seem to be the most important reasons to move to a small town?

SEGMENT 2

- Announcer:** It was once taken for granted that women
41. would abandon a job in order to tend to children. Many of today's working women, however, are qualified professionals with responsibilities and challenges, not to mention lucrative salaries. So it's no longer easy for women to put their careers on hold when a baby comes along. Jim Smith has filed this report.

Reporter: More women are working in managerial positions than ever before. There are more women professionals than ever before. Like their male counterparts, it is next to impossible for these women to leave their careers even temporarily without causing disruptions for themselves, their companies, or their clients. Because it's become difficult for professional women who want to have families to leave their posts, companies have had to come up with solutions so that such women can handle their commitments to their jobs and their children. Professor Petra Sanchez, who teaches Business Administration at State University, is here to tell us about some of these solutions.

- Expert:** There are two ways in which the problem is currently being dealt with. I should state, beforehand, that neither of these ways is without disadvantages, and the best way to handle the problem, unfortunately is not even being considered. One way is for companies to have agreements with daycare facilities nearby where working mothers can easily leave their children on their way to work. Because these facilities will be so near and funded by the company, working mothers will be able to quickly tend to their children should a problem arise. The disadvantage with this solution is there may not be any daycare centers that are conveniently located.
42. Another solution is to allow working mothers to stay home but to remain in contact with colleagues and clients online. They can use computers, cell phones, conference calls and the like. In this way, women can really take care of their kids while still keeping up with their professional obligations. The disadvantage here,
44. though, is that there are so many unexpected problems that can crop up requiring direct personal attention. What if a woman has to come into the office to handle an emergency and can't find a baby-sitter?

Reporter: What about flextime? Isn't that a possible solution, and one that isn't as costly as the other two you've just described?

- Expert:** Yes, that's another possible solution, I mean having flexible working hours, or flextime. With flextime, something that many male employees take advantage of, the individual can come in any time he or she wants to provided they're in the office at least four days a week for forty hours. But I didn't mention flextime because some women complain that flextime isn't actually a solution at all, since they may end up being away from their children for ten-hour stretches. Being able to be with them for longer periods of time during their off-hours doesn't make up for these absences.
43. So I kind of have mixed feelings about flextime, as do most professional women.
45. **Reporter:** The best solution of all which Professor Sanchez told me about would be to have on-site daycare facilities. In other words, companies could have their own daycare center within the building where employees work. This,

unfortunately, is too costly even to consider. So it seems there are no easy solutions for working mothers.

41. What seems to be one important reason professional women cannot stop their careers?
42. What is one way professional women can combine raising children and working?
43. What is Professor Sanchez's view on flextime?
44. What disadvantage will a woman working from home have?
45. Of all the proposals mentioned, which one is the best?

SEGMENT 3

Announcer: In this day and age of processed foods and food additives, it's almost reassuring to find out that the most commonly used methods of preserving food have been around for thousands of years. Reporter Mary Brown is here with more mouth-watering information.

Reporter: One of the few problems we share with our ancestors from several millennia ago is how to prevent food from going bad. Today we have a wide array of chemicals at our disposal that help food maintain its color, texture, taste, and even nutritional qualities. It's also possible, through genetic tinkering, to remove genes that cause foods to rot. This has been accomplished with different types of fruits and vegetables. These relatively new methods of keeping food have benefits, but they also harbor risks. Many forms of cancer, for instance, have been linked with preservatives that were once widely used. And there are chemicals still in use that cause consumers to worry. Some food preservatives remain in our system, stored in our liver for example, indefinitely. It's such fears which are beginning to prompt people to look for safer ways to prevent food from going bad. Here to tell us more about this is Ted Williamson, food scientist from City College.

46. Today we have a wide array of chemicals at our disposal that help food maintain its color, texture, taste, and even nutritional qualities.

47. And there are chemicals still in use that cause consumers to worry. Some food preservatives remain in our system, stored in our liver for example, indefinitely. It's such fears which are beginning to prompt people to look for safer ways to prevent food from going bad.

Expert: I just want to say that not all chemicals currently being used as preservatives are dangerous. Although there are some that we do retain, most are discharged by our systems. Nevertheless, the best ways to prevent food from going bad continue to be those ways used by our earliest ancestors. Many of these methods, in many parts of the world, have never fallen into disuse. They are sugar, salt, and smoke. Sugar as an agent neutralizes the enzymes that cause the rotting process in all vegetable matter. For this reason, it's widely used to make jams, marmalades, and other preserves. If properly prepared, and refrigerated, some jams remain safely edible for up to 18 months without chemical additives. Just as sugar retards the rotting process in vegetable matter, salt slows down the rotting process in meats and fish by absorbing all moisture. Many attribute the discovery of this technique to the ancient Spartans, who found that heavily salted meat would remain edible for months. This was something of extreme importance for a group of soldiers who had to march over great distances. The Romans are thought to be the first to store fish in salt, a practice used ever since throughout the world.

48. Sugar as an agent neutralizes the enzymes that cause the rotting process in all vegetable matter. For this reason, it's widely used to make jams, marmalades, and other preserves.

49. The Romans are thought to be the first to store fish in salt, a practice used ever since throughout the world.

Reporter: You mention smoke. What exactly is this, and what foods can it be used with? And how long can we store food that has been smoked?

Expert: Perhaps the oldest method of preventing food from going bad is smoke, a practice which has been used

- at least since Neolithic times, so we're talking about tens of thousands of years ago. Experts believe that Neolithic people would put their meat on racks over smoke to keep insects away. They soon discovered that meat that had been exposed to smoke did not rot as quickly. Even two hundred years ago, it was believed that insects were the main cause of meats and fish rotting. Of course, we now know that smoke prevents the growth of bacteria that cause food to deteriorate. What it basically does is it dries the meat making it impossible for bacteria to survive in the absence of moisture. By adding salt and refrigerating it, we can keep smoked meat for weeks. Smoke is primarily used with meats and fish, but in some places you'll be able to find smoked cheese, and even smoked fruits and vegetables.
50. know that smoke prevents the growth of bacteria that cause food to deteriorate. What it basically does is it dries the meat making it impossible for bacteria to survive in the absence of moisture. By adding salt and refrigerating it, we can keep smoked meat for weeks. Smoke is primarily used with meats and fish, but in some places you'll be able to find smoked cheese, and even smoked fruits and vegetables.

Reporter: So despite the numerous chemicals and genetic modifications we have at our disposal, the best way to keep our food from rotting seem to be the most ancient and the least scientific.

46. What is it that does not change, thanks to chemicals?
 47. According to the speaker, what do consumers seem to worry about?
 48. According to the information, what sorts of food can sugar help preserve?
 49. According to the speaker, what are the Romans famous for?
 50. How does smoke prevent meats from rotting?

PRACTICE TEST 9

LISTENING

Part 1

Example:

- M:** Mary and John should have come by now. I wonder what's keeping them?
W: It may seem as if they'll never get here, but they will. You know how Mary is when she's getting ready to go out.
M: I guess you're right. Besides, I can't think of one time they haven't been late.

1.
M: I don't like watching movies from a memory stick. The quality's not as good as what it is on a DVD.
W: Where've you been? Technology's improved so much that you can't tell the difference.
M: Maybe you're right, but watching them at a theater is still the best way to go.

2.
W: My computer keeps crashing. I don't know what to do.
M: Maybe it's a bug or something. Have you scanned it?
W: Yeah, but no virus has turned up.
M: Well, it's definitely a hardware problem.

3.
M: I think life was better in the 1990s than it is today.
W: What do you mean? Life's not that much different.
M: Yeah, I guess I should stop being so nostalgic.

4.
W: Why'd you accept such a low-paying job?
M: After being unemployed for as long as I have, I have no room for negotiating.

5.
M: How did club members finally vote?
W: As there was no quorum, there was no vote.
M: You mean over half the members were absent despite the meeting's importance?
6.
M: Could you tell Mary I want to see her in my office?
W: Again? What has she done this time? Nothing serious I hope.
M: You know Mary. If it's not one thing it's another.
7.
W: What do you think about the recession our country's in?
M: I'm afraid things will be getting worse before they start getting better.
W: Oh, so you're that optimistic.
8.
M: Has the committee reached a decision over how to spend the donations we've received?
W: Even after three marathon meetings, things are still up in the air.
9.
M: I hear the company you were working for went out of business.
W: Yes, but it's proved to be a blessing in disguise. It led me to my current job. I mean I never even had to apply for unemployment insurance.
10.
M: Mary's great with clients. At least, she seems to be pushing all the right buttons.
W: It's no accident. She's taken a month-long course on interpersonal skills at our local community college.
M: Looks like it's really paying off for her.
11.
M: Do you like the idea of a sports stadium going up in the heart of our city?
W: Well, I can take it or leave it.
M: I thought you'd've been all for it, since you like going to games so much.
12.
W: Can I borrow your tablet for a sec? I wanna check the latest headlines.
M: Can't it wait? I need to go over some figures which I'll be talking on at today's meeting.
W: Come on, isn't it time for you to have a break?
M: Brother! It's times like these I wish we still had newspapers.
13.
M: This cake would be great if it weren't so sweet. I can hardly eat it.
W: I think it's okay. And it should be sweet. I mean it's a cake.
M: It is possible to have too much of something good, you know!
14.
M: I think I'm going to buy one of these new computer tablets.
W: I'd think twice if I were you. I mean they're nothing more than expensive toys.
M: But you can do a lot with them.
W: Yeah, like what?

15.
W: You paid \$8000 for a ten-year-old car? If that's not an example of being taken, I don't know what is!
M: Yeah, but it's a great car, and it's loaded with extras.
W: You're kidding me, right?

Part 2

Example:

Have you heard the news about that new job I've been offered?

16. Are you sure you've been pulling your weight around here, 'cause most of us think you haven't been doing your share?
 17. Is it safe to make such long-term predictions with our investments?
 18. How are your flying lessons coming along?
 19. Who's responsible for maintaining our company website?
 20. What sort of time frame do I have before I give you my final decision?
 21. Did you actually have to endure three hours of classical music last night?
 22. Are you doing anything this evening, 'cause I was planning to visit the new modern art museum?
 23. Why can't you be on the same page as me when it comes to dealing with our finances?
 24. Why do your plans sound so tentative?
 25. I can't even speculate what would happen to our school if there was a cut in funding.
 26. Can we not get into this discussion now because it always upsets me when we talk about these things?
 27. You called the bank to let them know you lost your credit card, didn't you?
 28. Can I get digital versions of the books we need for the course?
 29. Did Sarah give any reason for that sudden outburst she had yesterday afternoon?
 30. Are you done with your studying? 'Cause Jill's gonna be here soon to have a coffee.
 31. Who do you think is going to win tonight's championship game?
 32. Do you really think computer games cause people to become more violent?
 33. Why do you say I should cut Brenda some slack if I'm not at all satisfied with her work?
 34. Have you figured out how to be at Marsha's wedding and Pete's birthday party at the same time?
 35. I think the movie we saw last night was way over- rated. Don't you?

Part 3

SEGMENT 1

Announcer: The teacher is in the middle of a complicated review the day before an important examination. However, she notices that a lot of her students are looking down at something in their laps instead of the board. This is one example of why cell phones should not be allowed in schools. However, reporter Mary Brown has found there are arguments supporting kids who find it hard to part from their phones, even when at school.

Reporter: Teenagers pack their phones everywhere, and

they are incessantly texting, watching something, or playing a game. Cell phones seem to be an accessory teens are reluctant to give up even when at school. Although the initial reaction of parents and many teachers is that this is something to be discouraged, there are those who favor kids having their phones with them even in the classroom. Barry Wilson, who is Principal of Central High School, our largest secondary school, weighs both sides of this issue. 36. 38.

Expert: I have to admit that, when cell phones started appearing in our school in significant numbers about a decade ago my first reaction was negative due to their many disadvantages. A major one is cell phones can get misplaced or swiped, something painful for a family on a limited budget. After all, some high-end smart phones carry a hefty price tag. Another disadvantage is that cell phones can easily distract teens in class. Cell phones are small, powerful, hand-held computers. Teens can surf the Net, watch videos, and chat with friends, frequently without the teacher even realizing it. This means the teacher can be explaining something, and students won't be paying attention. Internet access can facilitate cheating on exams when teens get stumped on difficult questions. Then there are cell phones suddenly going off when students are quietly working on something. 37.

Reporter: You list so many valid reasons why kids should leave their cell phones at home, I'm surprised you can argue in favor of cell phones at school.

Expert: I can because there is a plus-side to cell phones. For instance, just as teens can use their phones to cheat on exams, they can also exploit them as a learning resource simply because phones can access the Internet, the most powerful learning medium of all time. The teacher can show students how to surf the Internet for information that will make what's happening in the classroom more relevant. In addition, kids have to be able to contact parents whenever there is a need. A teen may need to phone home after some mishap – for instance a sudden illness or injury. It's for this reason that quite a few parents actually make sure their kids have their phones before leaving home. As for disrupting class when ringing, cell phones can easily be kept on silent mode. I think the important thing is to teach kids to be responsible with their phones. Schools administrators should have rules regarding cell phone use. Kids who break these rules can be punished by having their right to use their phones temporarily revoked. Any serial offenders can be banned from using their phones altogether. Of course, such an extreme punishment will be carried out with a parent's consultation. But banning phones completely is far from the answer. 39.

Reporter: It seems that cell phones are so ubiquitous that it is impossible to keep them out of schools. As Barry says, instead of stopping kids from having their cell phones, they should be taught to use their devices responsibly. 40.

36. What issue is the program focusing on?
 37. What disadvantage is mentioned with regards to teenagers bringing their cell phones to school?
 38. What does the expert say about cell phones at school?
 39. What advantage of cell phones in school does the expert mention?
 40. What is the expert's view with regards to teenagers taking their cell phones to school?

SEGMENT 2

Announcer: Immunization has been standard medical practice for decades. Almost 80 percent of US children have been fully immunized by the time they start school. The remainder maybe have missed only a shot or two. However, some parents are having second thoughts about immunization. Jim Smith reports.

Reporter: The vast majority of parents would never consider not vaccinating their kids. However, although they represent a tiny minority, some are depriving their children of this crucial protection. Diseases that were killing thousands of children just decades ago are no longer a threat thanks to immunizations. Why is it then that, currently, almost 5 percent of children are not immunized? Dr. Linda Olsen, professor of pediatrics, explains this alarming trend.

Expert: We've been administering vaccines since the 1930s. Just two generations ago, whooping cough, polio, and rubella, just to name three diseases, were plaguing children with devastating consequences. Today, these scourges have been virtually wiped out. But, in 1998, something alarming started happening. Parents in Britain, followed by others elsewhere in the world, started choosing not to immunize their children.

Reporter: Why's this so? Was there research showing immunization had harmful side effects? A backlash against something so beneficial seems strange.

43. **Expert:** The main fault lies with the media, and partly with the highly regarded British medical journal, The Lancet. In 1998, The Lancet, whose editors should've shown greater caution, published an article by Dr. Andrew Wakefield, a once-respected researcher. The article stated that the MMR vaccine, which protects children against mumps, measles, and rubella, provoked autism. The popular press blew this story out of proportion, causing a scare among the general public. There was a flurry of reports and TV news specials claiming that the MMR vaccine was linked with autism. Wakefield's article had sparked these sensationalistic stories. Fears peaked when reports exaggerated British Prime Minister Tony Blair's alleged reluctance to immunize his own child. Within a few weeks of appearing in The Lancet, Wakefield's findings were making headlines around the globe. By 2003, there was an increase in the number of unimmunized children due to the fear they'd become autistic. Sadly, there was also a rise in cases of mumps, measles, and rubella. Subsequent tests did not bear out Wakefield's claims, which the media ignored. In fact, a three-year inquiry
41. by the UK General Medical Council found that Wakefield had fabricated his results and that he had lied about everything only to get media attention. In 2010, The Lancet editors admitted to their negligence, retracted Wakefield's paper, and issued a formal public apology. This was to their credit, although they were twelve years late. Sadly, no one in the medical establishment caught Wakefield's fraud until after it had caused such damaging confusion. The consequences of this criminal irresponsibility continue to confuse and harm.
44. **Reporter:** Wakefield was eventually stripped of his license to practice medicine in the UK. Everything in his article has been discredited. There is absolutely no link between the MMR vaccine and autism. And yet, Wakefield's blatant lies continue to be quoted by irresponsible journalists. This

incident is a sad example of how false claims can have terrible repercussions. It's an example of how the media can cause tremendous harm by allowing false information to become accepted as truth. 45.

41. Which statement would best describe Dr. Wakefield's actions?
42. What false claim has caused so much confusion among the general public?
43. Why does the expert, Dr. Olsen, seem particularly upset?
44. How did the medical establishment in Britain react to Dr. Wakefield?
45. Where do the speakers primarily place blame for the problem presented in the program?

SEGMENT 3

Announcer: No high school sporting event is complete without cheerleaders. But while fans think the actual athletes are competing on the field, cheerleaders are probably performing the more physically demanding acts. Mary Brown reports.

Reporter: Cheerleading is an integral part of sports. Cheerleaders have to work as hard as any athlete, since cheerleading combines dance, gymnastics, and acrobatics. To be a cheerleader, you have to be in excellent physical condition. A recent study found that a typical cheerleader uses up as much energy during a football game as any of the players. And yet, cheerleading is not designated a sport. Sadder still, many fans take cheerleaders for granted. Dr. Peter Ronson heads our local sports injury clinic. Our listeners will be surprised to hear just how hazardous cheerleading can be.

Expert: With very elaborate choreography, including jumps, and flips that only trained gymnasts can perform, young girls – as most cheerleaders are girls – work hard to psych fans up during games. Cheerleaders need to practice as much as any athlete – and they need to be as gifted. Yet cheerleading is not considered a sport. If we bear in mind that more cheerleaders suffer injuries than athletes from all other high school sports combined, this seems particularly ironic. A recent study involving 1200 high school cheerleaders from all over the US showed that 45 percent suffer an injury during a typical season and that 5 percent suffer a serious injury. By serious I mean concussions that require hospitalization and broken bones. There is even a case of a girl being paralyzed after a fall. To put things in perspective, 20 percent of high school football players suffer injuries during a typical season, 3 percent of which are serious. Attitudes have to change and cheerleading must be governed by the same legislation regulating all other sports. 47. 48.

Reporter: Those are a lot of injuries for an activity we almost take for granted. Why are so many girls injured? And what will make things different if cheerleading becomes a bona fide sport? 46.

Expert: Cheerleading routines have become tremendously intricate, with backward somersaults and multiple tumbles. Girls can be thrown up to three meters into the air. If not properly caught, they can easily suffer serious injury. Because cheerleading is not listed as a sport, schools are 46.

- not required by law to take certain mandatory precautions. For instance, in order to qualify as a coach, irrespective of your sport, you need extensive training in first-aid. In addition, there must be a coach and at least two assistants at all practices. Each sport also has a set of safety guidelines that must be adhered to. There are no such guidelines for cheerleading. A lack of trained coaches, and the absence of assistants to help as spotters when the girls are working on a risky routine, all this means that injuries become inevitable. Cheerleading must be governed by the same criteria that govern all high school sports. This may mean an added expense to already stretched public budgets, but the cost of treating injured cheerleaders is already great in financial and personal terms. I'm sure those of us who pay taxes won't mind.
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Reporter: So next time you go to a football or basketball game, pay more attention to the cheerleaders. You can be sure that they've worked just as hard as the other athletes you've come to watch. They are just as deserving of our admiration.

46. Based on the information, what seems to be the most serious problem cheerleaders are facing?
47. According to Dr. Ronson, what percentage of cheerleaders suffer serious injuries?
48. Why does Dr. Ronson compare cheerleaders with football players?
49. According to the report, why is it important for cheerleading officially to become a sport?
50. What seems to be one consequence if cheerleading gets recognized as a sport?

PRACTICE TEST 10

LISTENING

Part 1

Example:

- M:** Mary and John should have come by now. I wonder what's keeping them?
- W:** It may seem as if they'll never get here, but they will. You know how Mary is when she's getting ready to go out.
- M:** I guess you're right. Besides, I can't think of one time they haven't been late.

- 1.
- W:** Can't you do something about that refrigerator? It's making so much noise.
- M:** I'm not a repairman. I don't even have tools.
- W:** I never expected you to fix it yourself, but to find someone who can.
- 2.
- M:** That was quite an emotional speech Professor James gave at his retirement party.
- W:** Yeah, there wasn't a dry eye in the room. I was even choked up.
- 3.
- M:** So I guess you've registered for the conference in Las Vegas. It'll be great.
- W:** Not so fast. I said I was thinking about it.
- M:** If that's the case you can stop thinking about it 'cause you've missed the deadline.

- 4.
- W:** Don't you usually go to the gym for a workout in the afternoon?
- M:** Yeah, but something unexpected came up today that I had to attend to.
- 5.
- W:** I helped Mary so much with that project of hers and do you know what kind of thank you I got? She never even acknowledged it.
- M:** Serves you right. I warned you about Mary.
- 6.
- W:** So how'd your job interview go?
- M:** It went well, but I'll be sitting on pins and needles until I get an answer.
- W:** Oh, you needn't worry. I know I'd hire you.
- 7.
- M:** Why is the cursor stuck? I move my mouse and nothing happens.
- W:** Maybe your computer has a virus. You may have to reformat it.
- M:** This means I have to reinstall all my programs.
- W:** Well, I know what you'll be doing for the rest of the afternoon!
- M:** And I thought you were going to help me.
- 8.
- M:** So, you gonna buy that computer tablet?
- W:** I kind of want to, but something tells me I may not actually need one.
- M:** Oh, go for it. Buy yourself a present.
- W:** No, I'll put it on hold.
- 9.
- W:** That movie was one of the most entertaining I've seen in a long time.
- M:** Well, I've seen better.
- W:** What about the rave reviews it's been getting? So many people can't be wrong.
- M:** To each his own, I guess.
- 10.
- M:** This cell phone is light years better than what you're hauling around now. And its features are not just bells and whistles. They're really useful tools.
- W:** Yes, but I haven't had my phone for longer than two years, and you're telling me it's obsolete?
- M:** Listen, technology is advancing in leaps and bounds.
- W:** You really want to make this sale, don't you?
- 11.
- W:** Our business has seen better days..
- M:** I know, but the outlook for the next six months is said to be good.
- W:** Hope so, 'cause if things continue like this we may be forced to let some of our employees go.
- 12.
- M:** Don't tell me you were at the office all day yesterday?
- W:** Where else would I have been?
- M:** Be careful or you're gonna burn yourself out.
- 13.
- W:** How are you managing with that house that you bought?
- M:** Okay, but maintaining it is a real handful.

W: That's because you got an older place. Had you bought a brand new house you would've had a lot less on your plate right now.

14.

M: How did things go with that new colleague you were so worried about working with?

W: We were initially kinda tentative, but by the end of the day we were really hitting it off.

15.

W: So I guess Mary was happy when she heard the news.

M: That's an understatement, if I've ever heard one.

Part 2

Example:

Have you heard the news about that new job I've been offered?

16. Are we gonna kick off the meeting or are we still expecting more members to show up?
17. Instead of just giving me hints, why not go the extra mile and tell me what I should expect on the exam?
18. Are you sure that this is the right decision that we should be taking?
19. Didn't he promise to give us his unequivocal support?
20. Don't you feel sorry for Charlie over the way he lost his job?
21. Didn't you say your report would be concise and to the point?
22. Is Bill still into basketball?
23. Isn't riding a bicycle without a helmet or lights in violation of the law?
24. How do you see the government's decision to increase interest rates?
25. Don't you think your plan to finish the project in a week is a bit too ambitious?
26. Have you made any sense of Professor Smith's last lecture?
27. Isn't the use of animals to test different products something totally unconscionable?
28. You could have been more subtle in the way you spoke to Angela about the problem she caused.
29. Aren't you afraid that John may fail to deliver on his promises?
30. Could you please reiterate your proposal and how it will benefit us?
31. Could you please speak up a bit?
32. How quickly did the police respond when you phoned them?
33. What do you put their success down to?
34. Why did you buy a cell phone with absolutely no frills?
35. Are you finished tinkering with the car?

Part 3

SEGMENT 1

Announcer: Scientific fact seems to be constantly challenging many commonly held beliefs. One such example is the belief that dolphins are among the most intelligent mammals on the planet. But are they? Some dolphin-lovers may be surprised to learn that their favorite mammal may be less smart than they think, not to mention less gentle. Jim Smith reports.

Reporter: Dolphins have always had a special place in popular culture. Their seemingly serene disposition, with their mouths formed in what appears to be a perpetual smile, makes us imagine them to be peaceful creatures. And because they display an impressive ability to perform complex tricks, we have the impression that they are extremely intelligent. But how much of this is true? Professor Jane Heath, a marine biologist at State University, is here to provide answers. 36.

Expert: A lot of people think dolphins are winsome and harmless and may even be able to communicate with humans. Others believe dolphins have an affinity with humans, to the point of even helping a human in distress. The truth is actually quite different. Dolphins are wild animals, and like all wild animals, they are unpredictable. This is even the case for trained dolphins. Let's also remember that dolphins are predatory animals. That dolphins don't attack tourists swimming in their midst in the tropics means only one thing. These dolphins are well fed and do not see the tourists as food. I say this because in areas where there is a shortage of food, namely fish and squid, dolphins will attack humans. For example, researchers from Aberdeen University, in Scotland were recently attacked by a group of dolphins. Two from the team were severely bitten. Dolphins have also been observed to attack and kill porpoises in their competition for food. 38.

Reporter: Okay, so you've shown that dolphins are not harmless. In fact, they can be pretty dangerous when they are either hungry or I guess even afraid. But what about their intelligence? It's a fact that they have fairly large brains. If I'm not mistaken, their brains are comparatively as large as our own.

Expert: It's true dolphins have large brains, but brain size is not the only criterion for designating intelligence. Were that the case, then birds should be even more intelligent than humans since they have extremely large brains with respect to their size. Of all living things, humans have the highest encephalization quotient. The encephalization quotient, or EQ, is the figure we get by comparing overall body size to the size of the brain. For humans, that figure is about 8. For dolphins, it's about 3.5, pretty impressive when compared with the 3 of chimps and the 1.5 of dogs. So, on the basis of their EQ number, dolphins seem pretty intelligent. But size is only one factor with regards to intelligence. An even more important factor is what makes up the brain. Dolphins actually have very simple brains. About a third of the typical dolphin brain is taken up by glial cells, which are basically fatty cells that offer protection from the cold. Glial cells do not really have any cognitive function. They add size, but they do not add brain- power! 37.

Reporter: The current understanding is that dolphins are slightly more intelligent than dogs, which is pretty impressive. However, dolphins are definitely not nearly as intelligent as humans, or other primates for that matter. It's interesting that, despite new evidence, myths about dolphins' behavior and intelligence persist. I even find it sad that most people cannot accept dolphins for what they are. 39.

36. What opinion is the program apparently supporting?
37. According to the information, what is the encephalization quotient or EQ?
38. Which statement is apparently true, based on information from the program?
39. Of the three animals mentioned in the program, which one has the most intelligence?
40. What does the reporter find sad?

SEGMENT 2

Announcer: Computer games have grown considerably more violent over the past decade, prompting regulations similar to those affecting movies. So, just as movies have a rating system, designating what people can see on the basis of age, computer games have a similar rating system. The fear is that computer games make young people more prone to anti-social behavior. But are such worries warranted? Mary explores this issue in her report.

Reporter: Whenever there's a violent crime involving a teenager, somewhere in the report there is reference to the assailant's habit of playing first-person shooter games. These are computer games in which the player takes a weapon and basically shoots at different people, usually in

42. some sort of combat. But even if players of these games don't go out and shoot real people, there are fears that they develop aggressive behavior. But is this true? Brian Brooks, professor of media studies, explains.

Expert: First-person shooter games first appeared about 20 years ago. Despite their violence, or perhaps because of it, they were initially seen as a harmless form of entertainment. As graphics improved and as computers became more powerful, these games started becoming impressively realistic. However, three highly publicized incidents in which

42. heavily armed teenagers committed heinous crimes in high schools drew a different type of attention to such games. In their search for what provoked these crimes, pundits started blaming violent computer games. It's unfortunate because, despite these tragic incidents, teen violence has fallen off since 1990, when such games first appeared. And gun ownership among teens has also been decreasing. In
43. several studies since 2002, no connection has ever been established between computer games and violence among young people.

Reporter: So basically computer games do not make people violent. Are you saying, then, that these games have no adverse effects? For instance, aren't they addictive? Don't they stunt the development of certain cognitive skills?

Expert: I'm amazed at how people demonize these games.

44. Are they addictive? I guess, but so is TV. As for limiting cognitive skills, it is emerging that first-shooter games may actually have benefits. In 2010, researchers at Leiden University showed that playing first-person shooter games enhances mental flexibility. The Leiden study found that first-shooter players are better at multi-tasking than non-players. First-shooter games require players to react quickly and to shift constantly between numerous simultaneous duties. Another interesting study was conducted at our own university. We got a group of 50 teenagers to play Grand Theft Auto, a game with a lot of violence, for two hours. We then gave them a questionnaire in which we tried to establish their feelings towards the game and what it taught them. 100 percent of them said they would never consider stealing a car. 85 percent said they could not imagine themselves firing a gun at another person. Our results
45. showed that first-shooter games, or perhaps any violent computer game, actually discourages teenagers from being violent because teenagers are allowed to see the ugly consequences of violence.

Reporter: Computer games, even the more violent kind, are pure entertainment. They are no better or worse than violent

41. movies and TV programs. If a teenager commits a violent crime, the reasons behind that crime run far deeper than what computer games that person plays.

41. According to the program, what causes teenagers to commit violent crimes?
42. Why did people start becoming concerned about first-person shooter games?
43. According to the program, what is the connection between teen violence and computer games?
44. According to the program, what seems to be one benefit of first-person shooter games?
45. Regarding first-person computer games, which statement would the speakers probably agree with?

SEGMENT 3

Announcer: People look for alternative ways to do things, in the belief that they are better than traditional approaches. In the case of fitness, a lot of people are replacing conventional aerobic exercising and weight training with yoga. Reporter Jim Smith has filed this report in which he investigates some truths behind yoga.

Reporter: We live in an age where we're spoiled for choice, and when it comes to fitness, this could not be truer. For those who are bored with treadmills and weights, there is yoga. Yoga is derived from the ancient Sanskrit word which means, *to join*. Its practitioners claim yoga more closely joins the body with the spirit or inner self. It's a combination of maintaining different positions while meditating. But what really lies behind yoga? Dr. Tina Peters, who teaches sports medicine at State University, is sceptical about yoga.

Expert: There's an experiment in which we had a group of people adopt yoga positions for 30 seconds, and then for a minute. We found that people gain no increased flexibility by increasing the amount of time they maintain a certain stretched position. Having said that, however, I

47. want to emphasize how important stretching is. We need to stretch pretty well every part of our body on a daily basis. Stretching relaxes our muscles, increases the range of movement in our joints, and increases the circulation of blood to various parts of our body. Through stretching, we

50. block blood and then allow it to surge into specific muscle groups thereby making ourselves feel more energized. But a stretching exercise needn't be longer than thirty seconds for each of these benefits to take place. A position needn't be maintained for minutes on end, which is what many yoga trainers make people do.

Reporter: Are you implying that yoga is just plain ordinary stretching by a different name? If that's the case, what about all the claims that it's linked with meditation and all the testimonials of how it has changed people's lives? A lot of people insist on feeling better after a yoga session.

Expert: I'm not entirely familiar with the history of yoga. I

49. only study it from a purely fitness-related point of view. Our research shows us that yoga positions are actually another example of conventional stretching, and I needn't go over again how important stretching is. But that's just it. Yoga

48. is just a more fancy term for stretching. As for feelings of well-being associated with yoga, this happens anytime we work out. After a good workout, we feel good. It's as simple as that. You'll feel good about yourself, you'll feel more in control, and you'll have increased self-confidence no matter what type of fitness program you're on. Even a short jog around your neighborhood will give you a great sense of well-being. So people who are shelling out sometimes a

46. significant amount of money for yoga classes, are perhaps paying for something they could be doing for free in their own homes.

Reporter: The bottom line is that yoga is just another name for normal everyday stretching. It's apparently no different. This of course does not belittle stretching, since it is crucially important. In fact, we need to stretch before and after every workout so that any benefits are maximized and

46. injuries are avoided. We should keep all this in mind before registering for costly yoga classes.

46. According to the program, what should people keep in mind before they take up yoga?

47. According to Dr. Peters, how important is stretching?

48. What is Dr. Peters finally suggesting?

49. What point is the program emphasizing?

50. Which statement would Dr. Peters agree with?