

Transcript for **Advice for exams**

Morning, everyone. Quiet, please. OK, I'm going to give you some advice to help you prepare for the exams next week. So make notes as I'm talking. Are you ready?

While you are studying, eat food that gives you energy. Don't be tempted to eat sweets or drink cola. Sugar won't help you study but fruit and cereals will. Apples are especially good.

Find a comfortable place with plenty of light when you study. But not 'too' comfortable or you'll fall asleep! Try and keep a positive mind. It is easier to study when you are positive and relaxed. If you start feeling anxious, have a break. Go out for a stroll around the block.

Don't try to learn everything. There isn't time. Choose the 'important' things, the things that will get you most points in an exam. If you aren't sure about this, ask me.

First learn the main ideas and don't worry too much about the details. If you have time, you can come back later and read the details.

Make notes of these key points and read them, then cover them up and try to remember all the points. It might be boring, but repetition helps you to remember.

Use past exam papers to study. They will help you understand what kind of questions come up. There are plenty of past exam papers in the library. You can photocopy them and take them home.

Take regular breaks while you are studying. A five-minute break every half hour is usually enough. Get some fresh air and stretch your arms and legs. Drink a glass of water too. It's important to keep hydrated. And, last but not least, good luck! I'm sure you will all do your best.

Listening skills practice: Amazing facts – transcriptTranscript for **Amazing facts**

- A:** Hey, I'm reading this really interesting article about the human body.
- B:** Yeah? Well, we know all about that from biology lessons.
- A:** No, we didn't learn much at all at school! They're discovering loads more things all the time. Really amazing things! Did you know that only about one tenth of the cells in your body are really you? The rest are bacteria.
- B:** What? I'm not really me?
- A:** No, of course you are you, but you also have millions, or trillions, of bacteria in you.
- B:** Eeeeeuuugh!
- A:** No, they're mostly really helpful. Someone did an experiment to see if animals can live without bacteria, and he found that a lot of them died or had to have a special diet. Animals need bacteria to digest food, you see. So we're better off with bacteria.
- B:** Unless the bacteria are bad.
- A:** Unless they are bad, but they're nearly all good. Oh yeah, and going back to cells, do you know how many cells you have in your body?
- B:** Quite a lot, I'd say. A good few.
- A:** Yeah, but how many?
- B:** I don't know. I'm not mathematical.
- A:** 7 octillion! That's 7 plus 27 noughts.
- B:** I knew it was a lot.
- A:** OK, that's an amazingly huge number, almost impossible to imagine. But the really weird thing is that most of the atoms are empty space, just air or nothingness. And if you took out the empty space, you could fit your body inside a tiny cube which measures one 500th of a centimetre on either side. That's a box measuring 0.002 of a centimetre on each side. You'd be much too small to see.
- B:** Mmm, I can imagine that. It sounds like something that would happen in a really bad Hollywood movie. You know, a mad scientist goes: (*funny voice*) 'I'm going to extract all the air from your body'. OK, enough facts for one day.
- A:** Don't go! One last thing, did you know ...
- B:** No.
- A:** Did you know that you probably have mites in your eyelashes?
- B:** Mites in my eyelashes? What are mites exactly anyway?
- A:** Yeah, they're very small creatures, like insects, only not insects. They're about a third of a millimetre long, so you can't really see them. These particular mites live in eyelashes and eyebrows.

Listening skills practice: Amazing facts – transcript

B: But in mine?

A: Well, maybe not. Only about 50% of people have them, and more older people. So you might not have any. Anyway, they're completely harmless, they just eat dead skin.

B: Yeah, right, harmless. I really would have preferred not to know that.

A: Sorry.

B: I mean, really!

Listening skills practice: Celebrations – transcriptTranscript for **Celebrations****A**

It was Nicky's idea, but we all think it's going to be brilliant. As soon as the last exams have finished, we're going to decorate the main hall at school with paper streamers and Chinese lanterns and things. Steve had this idea of projecting photos of everyone onto a wall, like a slide show. And we've got Jo's brother, who's a professional DJ, coming along. Then there are three different bands lined up to play. Ours is the best, because we've been together longest and we've got a great bass player, (*coughs*) although I say so myself, so we're on last. It's going to be cool.

B

Every year there's a carnival in August in London. You've probably heard of it, the Notting Hill Carnival? So this year, me and my friends are going again. We went last year and we had such a fantastic time. It's all Afro-Caribbean, with people in amazing costumes and these brilliant steel bands. We don't go in costume, but we do dance a lot. It does get quite crowded, so you have to make sure you stick together. And you have to watch out for pickpockets when there are so many people in the same place. But it's really good fun; it's like London becomes a different country. Even the police dance sometimes.

C

We're going to hire a boat for the day and take it up the river. It's my grandparents' golden wedding anniversary, so the whole family is getting together. I'm really looking forward to seeing my cousins again. I haven't seen them for ages. We've got this huge picnic planned, with loads of different types of sandwiches and salads and an enormous cake. My dad has borrowed an ancient gramophone player, you know, what they had before CD players, and some old records. So as we go up the river we're going to listen to music from the time my grandparents got married – the swinging sixties!

D

Two of my best friends have their birthday in the same week, so some of us have decided to have a surprise party for both of them. One of my friends, Sandra, has a big house, and her parents say we can use it. They're going away, luckily. It's at the end of October, so we're going to decorate the house with Halloween things, you know, spiders' webs and spooky things. We're going to make up an excuse to get the birthday girls to come round to the house – say we're going to help Sandra move some stuff, or something. Then, as soon as Sandra lets them in, we're going to turn the lights out and jump out at them! We just have to make sure nobody mentions anything on Facebook and gives away the surprise.

E

There's a Royal wedding in June – one of our princes is getting married – so it's a public holiday. Lots of people are having parties in squares and parks and places, and the people in our street decided to have one too. Well, it's a good excuse to have a party, isn't it? We're all going to take out tables and chairs and put them together in the middle of the road. We're going to stop cars coming through, obviously. We're all going to bring different dishes and share them round. There are quite a lot of different nationalities living on our street – people from India, China and different African countries – so the food should be really interesting. It'll be good to get to know more of the neighbours too.

Listening skills practice: Difficult situations – transcript

Transcript for **Difficult situations**.

A

Boy: Mum?

Mother: Yes?

Boy: You know that Economics exam I had last week?

Mother: The one you didn't revise for?

Boy: I did revise for it. I was working on it all weekend. Don't you remember?

Mother: Oh, yes, I remember. Apart from going out until four in the morning, you mean?

Boy: Well, I have to relax a little, even if I'm revising. Anyway, I didn't pass it.

Mother: You failed it! But wasn't that an important one?

Boy: Yeah, I'm really sorry.

Mother: I'm really sorry too. What does that mean?

Boy: Well, I'll probably have to retake the whole course.

Mother: Oh, Ryan! It's a really expensive course. I'm not sure we can afford for you to take it again. Things are difficult enough as it is.

Boy: I know, Mum. I'm sorry. I'll talk to the teacher again and see if I can retake it.

B

Girl 1: Hi, Megan. How are you?

Girl 2: Not feeling too good, actually.

Girl 1: Oh? Why's that?

Girl 2: Well, something terrible happened this morning ... (voice trembling)

Girl 1: What? Sorry, take your time, and tell me when you're ready.

Girl 2: Well, I was playing with Bonzo in the garden with a ball, and the ball went over the hedge into the road, and ...

Girl 1: Yes?

Girl 2: And Bonzo jumped over the hedge after it and he got hit by a car.

Girl 1: Oh, no! And is he ... ?

Girl 2: Yes. We took him to the vet's immediately, but there was nothing she could do.

Girl 1: Oh, poor Bonzo. And poor you. I know how much he meant to you.

Girl 2: We'd had him since he was a tiny puppy. He was like one of the family.

Girl 1: I'm really sorry. At least he had a happy life.

Girl 2: His life was too short!

Girl 1: Well, yes, OK. I'm sorry, that was a really insensitive thing to say. I'll come round and see you later, OK?

C

Boy: Hi, Dad.

Father: Hi, how's it going?

Boy: Did you have a good day at work?

Father: Same as usual, really. What about you? Good day at school?

Boy: Yeah, pretty good. Except for one little thing ...

Father: Why do I have a sinking feeling in my stomach?

Boy: Do you remember you lent me your phone?

Father: Yes?

Boy: Well, I was standing just outside school, texting Jack, and somebody ran past and grabbed it.

Father: You let someone steal my phone?

Boy: I didn't let them.

Father: No, I suppose not. But did you know that that might happen? Is that a dangerous spot?

Boy: Well, I had heard of that happening, but I'd forgotten. Anyway, I didn't think it would happen to me.

Father: No, OK. Did you see who it was?

Boy: No. It was someone in a blue tracksuit, and there are loads of people who wear those. But there's a CCTV camera on the entrance. It might have got a shot of the thief's face.

Father: You reported it then?

Boy: Well, not yet, but I will tomorrow.

Father: All right. Don't forget to report it tomorrow. I'll have a look at the insurance and see if it's covered.

Listening skills practice: Important people – transcriptTranscript for **Important people****A (Girl)**

She lives next door and she's always been really important in my life. When we were little and my mum was working she used to look after us. She'd tell us stories about her childhood. It was like listening to fairy stories, life was so different when she was a child. In her kitchen she used to keep a special dish with sweets for us, and she was always baking cakes and pies. Now she doesn't bake so much. She's started eating more healthily in her old age, salads and vegetables and things. It's funny how she's changed. She also goes to this special gym class for old people, it's amazing. I don't see her so often now, but she's always the same person however much her lifestyle changes.

B (Boy)

He's four years older than me and that seemed like a huge amount when we were children. When we were at the same school we'd never talk to each other during school hours. But now we're older it's a lot better, although I'll always be the little one, and that's annoying sometimes. He's taken me to rock concerts that I wouldn't have gone to otherwise and when he was at uni I went to stay with him sometimes. That was really cool. It was great to see what real student life was like when I was still at school. Now that he's working he's really busy, but we still hang out sometimes. We go to football matches together because we both support our home team. It's always good to see him.

C (Girl)

We've known each other since we were five and we've always got on really well. Well, apart from that time when we fell out because we both liked the same boy. But he went off with Heather Jenkins, so we made friends again quite quickly! We both like the same kind of music and going dancing at the weekend, and when we were younger we went out on our bikes together. At school we're good at different things. I'm good at languages and Laura's good at maths. That's good though – it means that we can help each other with our homework. Next year I'm probably going to study in London and she's going to Manchester, but I'm sure our relationship won't change.

D (Boy)

His family moved in just a few houses down from us when I was about ten, and I still remember how excited I felt when I found out there was another boy on the street. I'd been the only boy, you see. The others were all girls. We were good friends from the beginning because we were into the same things: computers and football, mostly. But we had quite a few of the same hobbies for a while. I remember making lots of models of aeroplanes one year. Another year we took up fishing. We had all the equipment and everything and we'd spend ages down by the river. I never go fishing now. His family moved away a couple of years ago. We're still friends on Facebook but we don't really have much contact.

E (Girl)

I can remember all the details of when we met. I was wearing a red dress and I'd just had my hair cut. I can even remember what music was playing the first time I saw him. I knew he was special from the beginning, and I was right. We've been together ever since. Well, it's only been eighteen months, and some people say that isn't very long, but it seems like ages to me. We've got such similar personalities and so much in common. I'm sure we'll stay together forever.

Transcript for **Llamas**

Zoo guide: OK, are we all together? Right, next we're going to look at the llamas, but actually here we have four different animals which are all from South America and all related to camels. Llamas, which you have probably heard of, over here. And over there alpacas, vicuñas and guanacos.

Llamas and alpacas are both domesticated animals and vicuñas and guanacos are wild. Llamas are the biggest animal – they can grow up to 1.8 metres tall and in the past they were used to carry things. Llamas are very sociable animals and live together in groups, in herds.

Teenager 1: Don't they spit at people, though?

Guide: Well, yes, they can. All members of the camelid family sometimes spit. You don't want to mistreat a llama; it might even spit some of the contents of its stomach at you.

Group of teenagers: Uuuugggh!

Guide: But if you treat them properly they are not likely to. They respond well to being trained and they are usually gentle and curious.

OK, over here we have the alpacas. As you can see, they are smaller than the llamas. They've got smaller faces and they always look as though they are smiling. Look at this one's face.

Group of teenagers: Aaaah!

Guide: The alpaca is famous for its wool, which is softer and warmer than sheep's wool. There's a big demand for alpaca wool from the fashion industry.

Right, next to the alpacas we have the vicuñas. As I said before, these animals are wild and they are thought to be the ancestors of the alpacas. Vicuñas are very elegant and graceful creatures. Look at this one. She's beautiful.

Group of teenagers: Mmmm. She's lovely. (etc.)

Guide: Have you heard of the Incas? The ancient rulers of Latin America who lived in the Andes? Well, they wore clothes made from vicuña wool – only the royal family were allowed to wear the wool. It is even softer than alpaca wool but vicuñas can only be shorn of their wool every three years. For that reason the wool's very expensive.

And, lastly, we have the guanacos. They are similar to the vicuñas, but larger and stronger. They are capable of surviving at over 4,000 metres in the Andes. When they are in the desert they survive by licking the water off the cacti and other desert plants. Right, any questions?

Teenager 2: I think I can hear this llama making a noise.

Guide: Ah, yes. That could be the llama humming. They don't open their mouths, they just make this strange noise. They hum when they are stressed, or the opposite, feeling relaxed.

Teenager 1: Can llamas live in the UK?

Guide: Yes, there are quite a lot of llamas and alpaca in the UK. They adapt very well to our climate. They make good pets and sometimes they're used for trekking. You go on a picnic and use a llama to carry your food.

Teenager 3: Cool! I want to do that!

Guide: And sometimes farmers use them as guard dogs, I mean guard llama. The adult males will protect sheep and hens from animals that might attack them, like dogs or foxes. They're really useful animals.

Listening skills practice: My favourite film – transcriptTranscript for **My favourite film**

- A (girl):** I really like *The Notebook*; it's a romantic classic. The story is about a poor boy, called Noah, who meets a rich girl, called Allie, and they fall in love over one summer. But of course there are problems. Allie's parents don't approve of Noah because he's poor and they get separated, then a lot of time passes before they can get together again. She goes away to college and he writes to her every day, but she doesn't get the letters. Then after quite a long time, Noah buys an old house which he promised to restore for Allie. He does it up and she sees a newspaper article about it and goes to find him again. You can probably guess the rest, but it's a bit complicated because she is engaged to another man. Noah is played by Ryan Gosling, who's my favourite actor, and he stops the film being too soppy – but you still cry a lot at the end. Rachel McAdams is really good too, as Allie.
- B (boy):** I think my favourite film is *Skyfall*, the last James Bond movie. It stars Daniel Craig again and Javier Bardem is this really evil baddie. They're both great, and so is Judi Dench as M, Bond's boss. It's a bit different to other Bond films. The story is more important, although there is still a lot of action. It's really well filmed, especially in the scenes which are shot in Shanghai and Scotland, and it's really exciting, of course. Bond is also a bit different – although he does amazing things, he seems older and that makes him more human and the story more realistic. Oh, the song by Adele is great, too. You know it won an Oscar?
- C (girl):** It's not a very recent film, but I love *Pride and Prejudice* – the version with Keira Knightley as Elizabeth Bennet and Matthew Macfadyen as Mr Darcy. The story is really clever and interesting, besides being romantic. It's all about how we tend to jump to conclusions about people and we're often completely wrong. Elizabeth thinks Mr Darcy is stuck up and snobbish at the beginning of the film, but at the end she realises she has been completely wrong and he isn't like that at all. She also realises he has an enormous house and that maybe helps her fall in love with him too! After I saw the film I read the book by Jane Austen and I really recommend that too. Although it was published 200 years ago, it's still a great read and really funny in parts.
- D (boy):** My favourite film has to be *The Matrix*. Even though it was made back in 1999, it still feels really modern. It's about this ordinary man, Neo, played by Keanu Reeves, who works with computers during the day and is a hacker at night. One day he is contacted by a woman who introduces him to a very strange man: Morpheus. Morpheus explains to Neo that what he thinks of as real is actually fiction and the world is run by evil machines who have imprisoned and tricked the human race. Laurence Fishburne is terrific as Morpheus, and Keanu Reeves is excellent, but the best thing about the film is the special effects. I can watch it again and again.
- E (girl):** *Let the Right One In* is my favourite film. There are two versions, the first is Swedish and the second American – I prefer the original, Swedish version. It's a modern vampire film and also a kind of love story, but it's really unsentimental and a bit scary in places. Oskar is a young boy with a lot of problems. He is being bullied at school and wants revenge on the bullies. Then some new neighbours move in next door and he becomes friends with Eli, a beautiful but strange girl. I won't tell you any more, because it will spoil the story, but expect a serial killer, a lot of violence and blood-drinking. If you like that kind of thing, you'll love this.

Listening skills practice: My favourite things – transcriptTranscript for **My favourite things**

A (boy)

My favourite thing has to be my new tablet. It's really light and quite small, so I take it with me everywhere. I'm always writing messages to friends and it's big enough to do college work on it too. It takes really good photos, and I play games and listen to music on it as well, of course. I often download films onto it and watch them in bed. My mum says I'm addicted, because I'm always on it. I even read things on it at breakfast time. I'm not allowed to at dinner time, though. I have to be polite and talk to people then. "Welcome back to real life," my mum says.

B (girl)

My favourite thing? Does my cat count as a thing? She's not really a thing, but anyway. She's a really beautiful little cat. I've had her since she was four months old. You know how some cats are really independent and hardly talk to you? I know cats don't really talk, but you know what I mean. Well, she's not like that at all. She's really affectionate and comes up to me as soon as I get home, purring away like mad. She makes a lot of noise for a tiny thing. She loves being stroked and comes and curls up next to me when I'm on the sofa. She's great company.

C (boy)

My new scooter! It's quite small, but fun, and just what I needed for getting around the city. I used to have quite a long walk to the metro, then a longish walk at the other end to get to college. But now I can just whiz there on my scooter. And there's no problem parking, there's always space for it. You have to be careful with the cars and lorries – they don't always see you – and when it rains the surface of the road is terrible, it gets really slippery. But in general it's perfect for me, and I can fit a friend on the back too – I've got an extra helmet for a friend. It's great. Riding along makes me feel so free.

D (girl)

This might sound a bit old-fashioned, but my sewing machine is my favourite thing. I'm studying fashion and love making things, as well as designing them. I also love clothes myself and often buy second-hand clothes – everyone loves the "vintage" look at the moment – and then I adapt them to my size. It's much easier using a machine to do that than doing it by hand. I do alterations for my mum and my sister too. If I don't make it as a designer, I suppose I can always set up my own alterations and customising business. Customising clothes, by taking things off and adding things on, is actually very creative, so I wouldn't mind that.

E (boy)

My set of Japanese knives. That sounds a bit sinister, doesn't it, but I'm not a murderer or anything. They're chef's knives and the best ones come from Japan. Cooking is my new hobby. I got into it when I started watching Masterchef on TV. Then I went to an evening class for beginners, and I haven't looked back since. I try and have a dinner for between four and eight friends every two or three weeks. That gives me something to work towards and I always do new dishes so they can try them out and give me feedback. It's quite an expensive hobby if you use good ingredients, but now my friends help towards the cost. They still get a good meal for a very low price.

Listening skills practice: Organising your time – transcriptTranscript for **Organising your time**

- Host:** On 'Star Students' today we're speaking to Peter who is going to tell us about the Pomodoro Technique, a system to help manage your time. It was invented by an Italian man called Francesco Cirillo in the 1980s. He called it the Pomodoro Technique after a tomato-shaped timer that his mother used to use when she was cooking. Pomodoro is Italian for tomato. And this tomato has helped Peter become an A-grade student. Welcome, Peter.
- Peter:** Thanks.
- Host:** Tell us about the Pomodoro Technique. What's it about?
- Peter:** It's about getting maximum productivity from your available time. I use it for studying, but professionals use it at work.
- Host:** Is it difficult to follow?
- Peter:** No. It's actually very simple. It's about breaking down your work into separate jobs and then using a timer to separate your time into periods of intensive work and short breaks.
- Host:** OK, that sounds sensible. How do you start?
- Peter:** First of all, you should think about the task you need to complete. For example, writing an essay for homework. You need to think about all the stages of the task and write a clear to-do list on a piece of paper. When you are ready to start you set the timer to 25 minutes and you start working on the first item on the list.
- Host:** OK ... but what happens when the timer goes off?
- Peter:** When the timer goes off you must take a short break of between 3 to 5 minutes. One 25-minute session is one 'pomodoro' so when you have completed this you deserve a short break. You should try to move about a bit during the break. Then set the timer for another 25 minutes and keep working. At the end of the next 'pomodoro' you have another short break. As you complete the items on the 'to-do' list you should tick them off, to give you a feeling of satisfaction that you're getting the job done.
- Host:** OK ... I get it. Can you use any timer? Most people have timers on their phones these days, can you use that?
- Peter:** You could, but the danger is that then you check messages on your phone or you start looking at apps. I use my dad's kitchen timer and I make sure I switch off my phone when I'm studying. I get so much more done. In the breaks I sometimes check my phone but only if I've completed some of the items on my to-do list.
- Host:** Three to five minutes isn't long for a break. Is that enough time?
- Peter:** Well, when you've had four or five short breaks you can take a longer break, then you start again.
- Host:** And it works?
- Peter:** Yes! It works for me. It stops me wasting time. My work is much more effective when I use the timer. It's like short, intense periods of work. I actually get my homework done a lot quicker now

which leaves me more free time, so for me it works really well.

Host: I think I'll give it a try. Thanks for coming in, Peter.

Peter: You're welcome. Thanks for inviting me.

Listening skills practice: Sports centres – transcriptTranscript for **Sports centres****A**

Hi, come in. I'm Maya. Hello, everybody. Welcome to the Grange Park Sports Centre. I'll just show you round the centre and explain what we offer here, and then you can ask me questions. Well, as you can see, this is quite a small centre but we offer a lot of different activities at different times of the day. If you'd just like to come through here, you can see the main rooms. These are nice and light and airy and we have a very good air-conditioning system so they are warm in the winter and cool in the summer. Here we have classes of yoga, tai chi, Pilates and Zumba at different levels. We also have different types of dance class: jazz dancing, Indian dancing and Latin dancing. Oh, and we've just started offering flamenco. All our teachers are fully qualified and experienced. We have beginners' classes up to advanced. Some of our students have been coming since we opened, ten years ago.

So, if you could follow me through here – mind the steps here – we've got the sauna and massage rooms. We have very reasonable prices for massages. And over here we have the gym with exercise machines. It's quite a small gym, but usually there's plenty of room for people to move around without any problems. OK, that's about it. Over there we have the changing rooms with showers. You do need to bring your own towel if you want a shower, but you don't need to bring a mat for the yoga and Pilates classes. Oh, and I must mention the café. It's just off the main entrance. That's very popular with our clients; we have a great selection of teas, fresh juices, sandwiches and cakes.

Right, the prices. You can join for three months, six months or a year and that gives you the right to use the gym and go to two classes a week. If you want to go to more classes or use the sauna, there's a small extra charge. For three months the fee is ...

B

OK, let me show you the gym. My name's Bill and I'm the main sports trainer here, but we have a team of four specialists who are always around to help you with exercise programmes and give advice about lifestyle and diet. We strongly recommend that you talk to one of us as soon as you sign up and set up your personalised training programme. So, through here we have the main gym. As you can see, it's enormous and we have lots of brand-new machines. You can do everything here: running, cycling, rowing, weights ... you name it. Although we have a lot of clients, it's very unusual to have to wait for a machine. Over there is the area for weight-training. If you want a closer look at the machines, you can come back later. Oh, by the way, you can only come in here with trainers on. No outdoor shoes, please.

OK, through here we have the swimming pool. It's great, isn't it? We're very proud of it. You can use it most of the time without booking, but there are certain times of day when we have swimming classes and water aerobics. There is always a lifeguard in attendance who will also offer informal swimming tips. OK, just over there you have the changing rooms and lockers, and on the right are the bathrooms and showers. We have our own shop, here, where you can buy our own brand of sportswear and sports drinks and supplements. Right, I can see you're impressed, and, as I said, we're very proud of our centre. However, I should warn you that we are slightly more expensive than other gyms in the area – but then we offer a much higher level of services and a very wide range of activities. Here's a brochure with the timetables of the extra classes that we offer, such as boxing, taekwondo and capoeira and quite a few others, besides swimming activities: swimming classes, diving classes, water aerobics and water polo. OK, so have a look at the brochure, then you can speak to one of the secretaries in reception about the best combination of activities for you.

Listening skills practice: The weekend – transcriptTranscript for **The weekend**

Girl: So, have you got any plans for the weekend?

Boy: Yeah, me and my mates are going to this activity centre in the mountains.

Girl: Oh, yeah?

Boy: You can do all kinds of things. It's a new centre; it sounds great. We're going to go dirtboarding ...

Girl: What's that?

Boy: It's like skateboarding or snowboarding. You have a board, or deck, to stand on and wheels. They're pretty strong because you go down rough mountain tracks on them. Steep, rough mountain tracks.

Girl: Sounds a bit risky. Have you done it before?

Boy: No, but I've done similar things. Anyway, we're also going to go canyoning. Before you ask, that's when you jump and swim down a river canyon. You have to use ropes and special equipment. And maybe we'll go white water rafting too.

Girl: Phew. It sounds far too difficult to me.

Boy: They have lots of things that you could do too. Like zip-wiring, you know when you go along a wire through the trees or down a mountain.

Girl: Go down a mountain on a wire!

Boy: It's really easy, and exciting too. You just have to hold on and enjoy the ride. Or there's bungee jumping.

Girl: Jump off a bridge on a long elastic band! Me? You've got to be joking! Anyway, I'm going away this weekend too, thank you for asking.

Boy: I was going to ask. So where are you going?

Girl: Paris! I'm so excited!

Boy: Paris, wow!

Girl: Yeah, it'll be brilliant! We're going to do all the sights, like go up the Eiffel Tower and take a boat along the River Seine and see the old parts of the city. It looks so beautiful in the photos. And then there are all the art galleries. You know how much I like art. I can't wait to go round the Louvre and see all those famous paintings.

Boy: I think the famous Impressionist paintings are somewhere else.

Girl: Yeah, I know, they're in the Musée d'Orsay. We're going there too. And then I want to go to the Rodin Museum and see that famous statue, you know, The Thinker. And of course, if we're in Paris, we'll have to go shopping. Or look at the shops, at least. And then there's the restaurants. Just think, French food!

Boy: You've got a lot planned for one weekend.

Girl: Oh, we're going for four days, actually.

Boy: Oh, four days, very nice. And who are you going with?

Girl: Oh, just a friend.

Listening skills practice: Theme parks – transcriptTranscript for **Theme parks**

Interviewer: Good morning. Today we're going to talk about theme parks and we're going to hear from Andy Wells who has written a guide to theme parks around the world. Welcome to the programme, Andy.

Andy: Hi, it's good to be here.

Interviewer: You really have a dream job, don't you, Andy? Flying round the world all the time, visiting adventure parks ...

Andy: Well, yes, it's pretty exciting. But it's really hard work too, you know.

Interviewer: I bet. So, what's the number one theme park in the world?

Andy: That all depends what you're looking for. In terms of numbers, it has to be Magic Kingdom at Disney World in Florida, the most famous theme park. But the most popular park for people who like adventure rides is Cedar Point in Ohio, USA. It has the biggest number of rollercoasters in one park, 17, and three water rides. There are lots of other attractions too. Last year they introduced 50 animatronic dinosaurs. You know, life-size models that move and look real.

Interviewer: Cool! Have they got anything lined up for this year?

Andy: Yeah, there's a new rollercoaster called the Gatekeeper. Well, actually it's not a rollercoaster, it's a wingcoaster. It'll be the biggest in the world.

Interviewer: What's a wingcoaster?

Andy: With a normal rollercoaster you are sitting on a seat with the track under you. With a wingcoaster the seats kind of stick out at the side so the passengers have nothing below or above them. You feel as if you're flying.

Interviewer: So it's more frightening?

Andy: More exciting! Way more exciting.

Interviewer: What other attractions have you seen recently?

Andy: I've just been to The Wizarding World of Harry Potter at the Islands of Adventure in Orlando, Florida. It's great! You know those shops that sell magic sweets and things in the Harry Potter books? Well, they have those, just like you've imagined. There's a fantastic tour of Hogwarts School where you meet characters from the books. It's so well done.

Interviewer: Right, sounds interesting. In your book you have a lot of theme parks in Asia too. Can you tell us about them?

Andy: Sure. Tokyo has had a Disneyland for quite a long time, which attracts a lot of people. Ocean Park in Hong Kong has also been going for a long time – that has a lot of marine animals as well as rides. Lotte World, a huge park in South Korea, has the world's biggest indoor theme park. And then there's Universal Studios in Singapore. That's expanding with additions to its New York street section. There's going to be a Sesame Street dark ride. A dark ride's a ride inside a building.

Interviewer: I see. New York in Singapore?

Andy: Yeah, it's weird, but it works. But the place to watch at the moment is China – they're really expanding. Lots more parks will open in China in the next few years, including another one with dinosaurs in the north, and Ocean Kingdom in the south. That will have the world's longest roller coaster and tallest Ferris wheel, as well as boat rides and a night-time zoo.

Interviewer: Wow, so that's opening soon?

Andy: Yes, this year. I'll be there!

Interviewer: Have a ride for me, then.