

**Listening skills practice: Help others, help yourself – transcript**

Transcript for **Help others, help yourself**

- Interviewer:** Today I'm going to talk to two young people who are both doing voluntary work in the sports sector. First there's Liam Parker, who is a keen BMX biker and does a lot of work at a sports centre. And then there's Debbie Sanford, who has volunteered to help with many different sports, and who now has a paid job with a sports organisation. So, Liam, tell us a bit about the place you work – it sounds really interesting.
- Liam:** Yes, it's really cool. Basically it's a huge space where lots of sports and cultural events take place. It used to be a shipbuilding hangar, but the company went bust years ago. The building was taken over and completely renovated and repurposed about five years ago. Now we have facilities for all kinds of urban sports like skateboarding, breakdancing, Parkour, kick scooter ...
- Interviewer:** Hang on a moment, can you explain the last two?
- Liam:** A kick scooter is just a normal scooter with a handlebar, deck and wheels. But now we have stunt scooters and special ones for racing. And Parkour has been around for a while now. It's a way of moving around an urban environment – it developed from military training. It involves climbing, running, vaulting, jumping, swinging and stuff like that. Everyone's seen it on TV and videos, people jumping off incredibly high buildings, between roofs and things.
- Interviewer:** So what are you involved with?
- Liam:** My passion is for BMX, and I want to get other people involved in the sport. But I do all kinds of things at the centre. I make sure the bikes and scooters meet safety standards. I check the tracks and ramps so that they are clean and no one can slip and hurt themselves. I teach kids the basics of BMX and do demonstrations. I sometimes cook in the burger van too.
- Interviewer:** Right, so you've learned a lot of skills?
- Liam:** Yeah. At first I was a bit nervous about speaking to groups, but now I have no problem giving safety inductions to people. I had to learn sports-specific first aid in case anyone hurts themselves, cooking hygiene for the burger van, maths for taking money at the till. I've had a lot of training in different areas and gained useful certificates.
- Interviewer:** So all that training will be valuable when you come to look for paid work?
- Liam:** Absolutely. I'm still only 18 and I've been volunteering for two years. I'd like to stay in this sector and find full-time paid work, so obviously all my experience and skills will help a lot.
- Interviewer:** Thank you, Liam. And now, our other guest has made that jump from voluntary work to paid work. Debbie, you've been involved in many different sports in your 22 years, haven't you?
- Debbie:** Yes, quite a few! I started off playing football at county level and then got into coaching. I reckoned that I wouldn't have been able to play football without the help of volunteers, so when I had the chance to help other people, I did. Then I started a degree in Sport Development and I realised that lots of people like me would soon have a degree and be looking for a job and I'd need more experience to compete with them all!

**Interviewer:** So you volunteered again?

**Debbie:** Yes, I spent a year helping with an online sports volunteering bureau and volunteered at various events including a cricket tournament, a table tennis championship and a half marathon.

**Interviewer:** Wow, that's a lot of experience!

**Debbie:** Yes. I must add that I don't actually play cricket or table tennis myself, though I do run. You don't have to be an expert in a sport to volunteer – there are lots of jobs that need doing.

**Interviewer:** And now you've finished your degree and you're working.

**Debbie:** That's right. I wrote my dissertation on the retention and recruitment of volunteers, and now I manage volunteers for an organisation promoting swimming. I also organise events at a national level. I would never have got the job without all my volunteering experience. It helped me loads.

**Interviewer:** And finally, a question for you both. Do you think we sometimes exploit volunteers in this country? Are they doing things for free when they ought to be getting paid? Liam, I believe that you volunteer for about ten or twenty hours a week. Do you ever feel that you should be paid for what you do?

**Liam:** Well, of course, it would be nice. But the organisation I help is non-profit-making and it couldn't really afford to pay all the volunteers. At the moment, I'm happy to do what I love and gain experience of dealing with the public. I'm living with my parents and they are paying my keep. In the future I'll have to look for paid work.

**Debbie:** I think many volunteers feel they want to give something back to their sport. It was like that for me with football. Ideally it would be good to have more paid positions, but we also need volunteers. Sport just couldn't function without them. It is really important to give people recognition for what they do, though.

**Interviewer:** Thanks very much for sharing your experiences. And now, we're going to move on ...

**Listening skills practice: How false information spreads – transcript**

Transcript for **How false information spreads**

**Presenter:** Hi, everyone. On today's Tech-times podcast we're lucky to have Sam Wogan, a well-known digital journalist, with us. So, Sam – what interesting techie-topic would you like to talk about today?

**Journalist:** Hi, Brad. Today I'd like to talk about some of the reasons why we shouldn't automatically believe everything we read online, and how false information spreads so easily with the help of technology. One of the reasons for this is a phenomenon known as circular reporting.

**Presenter:** Circular reporting? What's that?

**Journalist:** Well, it's basically reports which are based on other reports, rather than on the primary evidence or source. To the reader, it looks like the information is coming from several different independent sources, which normally means it can be trusted. But, in actual fact, all the reports are based on each other. Imagine a piece of false information is published, for example on Wikipedia, and then is referenced in a newspaper article or other publication. Then, in turn, the original Wikipedia entry references or quotes the article as validation that the information is true. In a nutshell, it's the confirmation of false information by more than one publication.

**Presenter:** OK, let me see if I've understood this correctly. So, someone writes an article on Wikipedia which contains some false information ...

**Journalist:** That's right, false information which is not referenced or checked and in no way is obvious as being false.

**Presenter:** OK, and then this false information is copied from Wikipedia by a journalist and included in a newspaper article.

**Journalist:** Yes, or other type of article, as if it were true information.

**Presenter:** And then Wikipedia references the newspaper article, which verifies the information in the original Wikipedia article as being true.

**Journalist:** That's right! And sometimes it's not just one newspaper article that cites the false information. Several publications may include it and so it becomes very difficult to prove that the original information is false. Let me give you an example. A few years ago a 17-year-old American student was on holiday with his family in Brazil. He spotted what he believed to be an aardvark, but which was in fact a type of Brazilian raccoon called a coati. When the boy got home after his holiday, he went online and changed the Wikipedia entry by adding the name 'Brazilian aardvark' to the information on the article, as a sort of joke, and then he forgot about it and thought nothing more of it. However, what started to happen was that articles and blogs began to quote the information from Wikipedia and then those articles were re-reported as evidence in Wikipedia. Before long, everyone was talking about the 'Brazilian aardvark' as if it were factual information.

**Presenter:** So when information makes its way from a Wikipedia page into a published article, the article could be spreading false information without even realising it?

- Journalist:** Exactly! It makes you wonder how many hoaxes initiated by people in this way have ended up as truths in many people's minds just because people copy and paste vandalised Wikipedia pages. That's not to say that all information on Wikipedia is false by any means. There's a ton of really valid information there and it is constantly being updated – many people consider it to be the most up-to-date and unbiased encyclopaedia in the world. However, it is the open structure of Wikipedia, compared to a traditional encyclopaedia, which makes it a target to be tampered with.
- Presenter:** So we just have to be aware that there may be a certain amount of inaccuracies on Wikipedia?
- Journalist:** Yes, and it's also worth mentioning that circular reporting is not just restricted to harmless information like the 'Brazilian aardvark'.
- Presenter:** Isn't it?
- Journalist:** No. For example, some time ago, claims that certain vaccines could cause autism in children were published in a prestigious medical publication by a British surgeon. The problem was that the unsupported claims were picked up by the media and the news spread like wildfire. Soon enough the general public were understandably concerned about the risks and huge numbers of parents refused to vaccinate their children. Consequently, in recent years we have seen an increase in the number of children suffering childhood diseases such as measles. By the time the claims were proven unfounded, the damage was done and even to this day some people still believe that there is a link between vaccines and autism.
- Presenter:** It just goes to show how difficult it is sometimes for the truth to be heard.
- Journalist:** Absolutely.
- Presenter:** So, in practical terms, how can we be sure that what we're reading is true?
- Journalist:** Well, we can take certain steps such as checking the original source of the information and, if at all possible, checking that the original source is reliable and not just taken from either Wikipedia, Facebook or the media.
- Presenter:** Right, so we need to be a little more critical and not just believe everything we read online.
- Journalist:** That's right, although it's difficult because we want information quickly and immediately, so it's not always viable to spend time checking the sources of information, even though we should. And we should certainly try and reflect on the information and decide ourselves if we think it's true or not. If you feel unsure about the validity of certain information, then there's no harm in looking into it further to check how true it actually is.
- Presenter:** That's very true. We often take things at face value and don't really take the time to think critically about them.

Transcript for **How to break into the music industry**

**Jeff Seagle:** Hi, everybody. I'm Jeff Seagle. Good to see so many people here. As you know, I've been asked to come along and give you some advice about how to break into the music industry. And before I start I'd better make it clear that this talk is for people wanting to work with and for artists, not to actually be musicians, OK?

Right, so I've been in the music biz for quite a number of years now, and I've worked with a lot of amazing people. So here are my tips, for what they're worth. First of all, I know a lot of you are thinking about further degrees, but forget the MBA. This business is much more about experience than qualifications, so it's better to start working as soon as you can. Easier said than done, you might say, but I'm talking about any kind of relevant work experience.

Don't panic – you can start small! Go along to your local music venue or a small music company in your home town and see if there's anything you can do. It could just be selling tickets on the door – you'll get to meet people and one thing might lead to another. Obviously paid work is better than unpaid, but you have to start somewhere. You need to be in an environment where you are learning stuff and making contacts. Ah, a question already – yes?

**Girl A:** What about being an intern? Are there many internships available nowadays?

**Jeff Seagle:** There definitely are some. Not a huge number – as you know, it's a very competitive industry, but the bigger companies certainly do take on people. And if you get your foot in the door at a big place you've really got to prove your worth. Show the higher-ups that you have some kind of unique skill or knowledge. Maybe something to do with social networking, or even knowledge of the music scene in the place you grew up. If you possibly can, let them see that you have something special to offer, and with any luck, they'll keep you on. Remember that companies often want interns because they're young and have their finger on the pulse. Show them that you know what's going on, what people are listening to, how to find new acts, and so on. Find a cool app that they don't know about. OK, another question?

**Boy:** How important is networking?

**Jeff Seagle:** Meeting people and making connections is absolutely vital. If people see you as an ambitious 'networker', if they think you're just using them, that's not so good. Nobody wants to feel like a stepping stone in someone else's career. But people are often willing to give younger people the benefit of their experience and, of course, we're all susceptible to a bit of flattery. So my advice is to find people in the business you genuinely admire and ask them questions. If you're an intern, start with your boss, then move on to others in the building, after getting your boss's permission. It's also good to chat to anyone who shares your passion for music, people on the door in clubs, band members, fans or music executives. You never know what information might be useful or which contact may help you in the future. Oh, and one other point about networking, bear in mind that nowadays the personal and professional lines are sometimes blurred. That means that anything you post online for your friends to see can also be seen by potential professional contacts. Make sure that everything people can see about you reflects the

image you want to project. Next question from over there?

**Girl B:** You've talked about the music industry, but I'm not sure what kind of jobs are available exactly. Could you give some examples?

**Jeff Seagle:** Sure, and that's a good point. You need to work out what you're best at, and what you feel most passionate about, and let that guide your career path. It could be working in publicity, promoting artists; working in A&R (that stands for Artists and Repertoire), discovering new talent and matching artists up with musical collaborators; booking acts for TV shows; helping a new band become successful by working with their management team. And of course now there are hundreds of jobs connected to the internet. You could be managing a website or blogging for a label. Or social media manager for a band – running their social media channels. Things are changing so fast – a lot of the music portals we use today have only been in existence a short time. Who knows what's coming next and what new jobs will be created?

**Girl B:** Thanks, that's really useful. I also wanted to ask how you deal with celebrities. Have you worked with many?

**Jeff Seagle:** Yep, quite a few. The main thing is not to be star-struck, just treat them as clients, it's a business relationship. If you get tongue-tied and clam up, everyone will feel awkward. The other thing is that the unknown singer of today could be the star of tomorrow, so you need to treat everyone with respect. I remember, right ...



**Listening skills practice: Living online – transcript**Transcript for **Living online**

- Speaker 1:** I think that even up until just a few years ago we could never have imagined how our behaviour would change with regards to using mobiles and tablets. I know that I would find it incredibly difficult to live without my mobile. I'm constantly looking at my phone to see if I've got any new messages or updates, and checking my apps to see what's new. I wouldn't say that I post my life online, not like some people I know, but I do like to keep up with what people are up to – friends, family and even other people I know but maybe haven't seen for years, like old school friends, and check out photos of what they look like now, ha ha ha (laughing) ...
- Speaker 2:** In a way, I think it's quite funny that we're always worrying about teenagers and young people becoming obsessed with online communication, but if you ask me we need to worry just as much about adults! At the office where I work, even when we have a break, nobody talks to each other unless they absolutely have to, which is a sorry state of affairs to say the least. Everyone's too busy checking their social networks and sending messages to have time to communicate face-to-face! People spend their lunchtime glued to their screens or barely glance up from their phones. Even during meetings people can't resist subtly checking their phone, and what really irritates me is when you are trying to talk to someone and they're more interested in looking at their phone than paying attention to what you're saying, even though you're right in front of them! Phubbing, I think it's called!
- Speaker 3:** I was listening to this discussion on the radio the other day talking about online communication and they were talking about FOMO or, what was it, Fear of Missing Out, which apparently is a kind of modern-day psychological syndrome which we're affected by because of our obsession with online communication. Basically, they were saying that the reason why people feel that they have to be connected 24/7 and communicate everything they're doing and keep up with everything that other people we know are doing is down to this fear of missing out. We're worried that everyone is having more fun than us or doing something more exciting than us. They also said that because we're spending more time communicating in the online world, we're losing the ability to enjoy the present.
- Speaker 4:** My generation is so different to my parents'. I mean, they're always telling me that they grew up in a world without mobiles and social networking and they managed fine. Hard to imagine how they arranged to meet their friends without a phone ... but they say they did! Uh ... I had so many arguments with them while I was growing up, until they let me have my first smartphone. But they didn't let me have Snapchat or Instagram or anything like that! 'It's not the end of the world,' they'd say! They just didn't understand that that's the way people my age communicate with each other. Nobody actually talks on the phone any more. They have no idea how much I missed out on at school being the only one who didn't have Snapchat. Also, at school we had loads of talks and stuff on how to stay safe online and most of us knew that anything you post online was going to be there forever.
- Speaker 5:** For me, one of the best things about online communication is that you can stay in touch with everyone at the same time, all the time. You know exactly what's going on, when and where, so you never miss out on anything. I love the fact that you can update all your friends on what's going on in your life and they can respond immediately with a like or a comment, so you feel like you're together with people even though you might be completely alone sitting on a bus or at home. I share loads of photos, but I only post up my best edited shots. I hate it when people I know post photos of me not looking my best.

**Listening skills practice: Man or beast? – transcript**

Transcript for **Man or beast?**

**Presenter:** Good afternoon and welcome to 'Book Corner'. Our first review today is of an unusual book by Charles Foster which is a combination of nature writing, biology, philosophy, personal memoir ... it's not very definable, but it's already being described as a modern classic. Jon, tell us about the book you've been reading.

**Jon:** You're quite right, it's not very easy to define. The title is *Being a Beast* and the book is about the author's attempts to be a beast, that is, to live as an animal, or rather as several animals: a badger, an otter, a fox, a red deer and a bird. He says he wanted to really know what life was like for these animals and so he did the conventional research, the reading and so on. Then he actually tried to live in the same way as them, as far as possible. For example, when he's being a badger, he goes to live in a hole in the ground and crawls around a wood, learning to identify different trees by their smell. He even experiments with eating earthworms. Eighty-five per cent of a badger's diet is made up of earthworms – did you know that?

**Presenter:** Ugh! I didn't know that. He took one of his children with him, didn't he?

**Jon:** Yes, his eight-year-old son, Tom. Foster says that children make better animals than adults in many ways – they use their senses to understand the world more, and they think in a much less abstract way than adults. Another reason why he took his son is that badgers are social creatures and would never live alone. He says that Tom adapted quickly to being a badger, learning to smell mice, hear tiny forest sounds and get around on four feet.

**Presenter:** How did Foster tackle being the other animals?

**Jon:** In the same kind of way. As an otter, he spent a lot of time in the rivers and lakes and the sea, as an otter would – alone this time, since otters are solitary. The otter's big problem is that it has to spend all its time hunting for food in order to survive, and that feeling of desperation was hard to recreate, but he did catch live fish in his mouth. To try to live as a red deer, Foster went to the north of Scotland. He nearly died from exposure to the cold out on the mountains, and he asked a local to set his dogs on him so that he could experience being hunted.

**Presenter:** What happened?

**Jon:** The dogs realised that he wasn't a red deer! That episode left Foster feeling that he had failed to get close to understanding the animal, but he had much more success as a fox. In London, he tried to forage for waste food, as an urban fox would. There's one very funny part where he's trying to sleep on the ground like a fox, and a police officer tries to move him on. He tries to explain that he's trying to be a fox ...

**Presenter:** ... and gets arrested, I suppose!

**Jon:** Almost! In London he had the kind of animal encounter that he'd been hoping for: a fox looked him in the eye and he felt some kind of relationship was being established, animal to animal. He felt he had got close to understanding foxes – he had great respect for their ability to survive and thrive in the city. The end of the book is about swifts, those amazing birds which travel thousands of miles between continents every year.

**Presenter:** It must be hard for a human to live like a swift.



- Jon:** Absolutely! Foster can't fly! The nearest he can get to the birds is by standing in a tree and trying to catch insects. But this section has a lot of fascinating facts about swifts, and about other animals. In fact the whole book is very witty and engaging. It asks lots of important questions about what it means to be human and animal, and provides quite a few possible answers. I really recommend this to anyone with any interest in animals, or in humans, in fact. Although it contains some scientific detail, it's a very good read, by the way. Very entertaining.
- Presenter:** Well, I'll certainly look out for that book, Jon. Thanks. Now, our next book is about something completely different ...

**Listening skills practice: Sleeping for exam success – transcript**

Transcript for **Sleeping for exam success**

**Teacher:** Good afternoon. So we're fast approaching exam season and I can already see a lot of tired faces here in front of me. Well, today we are lucky enough to have Professor Manson from the University of Denton talk to us about how sleep can help us pass those all-important exams. So without any further ado, I'd like you to give a big round of applause and stay wide awake for Professor Denton.

**Professor:** Good afternoon. Looking around this room now takes me back to when I was your age and life seemed to be a never-ending chain of exams and assignments. At that time, organisation was not my forte and too often I found myself up all hours of the night before an exam cramming every last piece of information I could in an attempt to remember something. Does that sound familiar to any of you? Can I just see a show of hands how many of you this term have had no more than 3 or 4 hours' sleep before an exam? OK, so that's a clear majority and it has to be said that last-minute revision can do wonders for the short-term memory, but what is, in fact, even more beneficial is a good night's sleep.

So, I'd like to explain to you now, especially you all-night crammers, the link between sleep and memory and how a good night's kip can improve your exam results. Now, could everyone take a minute to work out, on average, how many hours' sleep they get every night. Can I see a show of hands for more than 10 hours? OK, none of you, how about between 8 and 10 hours? A handful of you. OK, so what about between 6 and 8 hours? Right, that's a popular option. And any of you fewer than 6 hours? Mmm ... OK, so you're the guys we most need to worry about.

According to the National Sleep Foundation in Washington, newborn babies need anything between 14 and 17 hours' sleep and this amount gradually decreases the older we get until as adults we need around 7 or 8 hours sleep, but ... you'll be interested to know that the 14 to 17 age group should be aiming for 8 to 10 hours' sleep a night. So you can already see that most of us are not getting enough sleep, and this is something we need to think about.

Sleep is essential. The human body simply can't survive without it. End of story. While we're asleep, the body checks that all our vital functions such as growth, circulatory systems and our immune system are in good working order. And while we're snoring away, our brains are very active restructuring information we've collected during the day and consolidating memories.

So let me explain memory consolidation. Memory consolidation is what happens when information is moved from our short-term memory to our long-term memory with the help of a major part of the brain called the hippocampus. This is it folks ... this is the BIG moment when all of those facts and figures that you have crammed into your short-term memory are processed and consolidated in your long-term memory.

However, as you're probably aware, we don't always remember everything. One reason we remember certain things better than others relates to the environment or conditions we were in when we originally made the memories. What experts have discovered is, the more emotions that are activated when we make a memory, the more likely we are to consolidate that memory. So, for example, the more interesting or fun you find a biology lesson, the more chance there is of you remembering information from it ... OK, teachers? And not only that ... we actually need to review information again and again after certain periods of time to help the consolidation process, which is why well-planned exam revision timetables are

far more effective in the long term than short-term cramming the night before.

And one reason why it's important to get enough hours of sleep is that this process of consolidation happens during certain stages of sleep. So you're probably aware that there are different stages of sleep. The initial stages of sleep are a much lighter type of sleep and it's not until we reach the later stages of deep sleep, what we call 'slow wave sleep' because the brain waves are much slower, that we consolidate our memories. These slow waves help move the information we have collected and stored in the hippocampus to our long-term memory.

So what we have here is enough evidence to conclude that the best way to help you pass your exams is to learn the information in a fun, interesting way, review it regularly, and most importantly, get plenty of good-quality sleep.

And before you all drift off into a peaceful slumber, I'd like you to ask any questions you might have.

**Teacher:** Thank you, Professor. OK, any questions?

**Listening skills practice: Teens going veggie – transcript**Transcript for **Teens going veggie**

**Speaker 1:** I switched to vegetarianism two years ago because I read an article about all the health benefits – best decision I've ever made. I feel so much healthier now. My skin is really good and my hair is much shinier. You have to be super-careful though that you still get all the nutrients you need in your diet. The main problem for me is that I'm the only vegetarian in the family, and the others want to eat meat and fish. So sometimes it's a bit of a pain for my mum, because she's the one who does most of the cooking. She usually cooks for the rest of the family, then throws something together quickly just for me. She says I should learn to cook for myself, but I've got so much homework at the moment ... OK, I am a bit lazy about cooking. I'm going to have to get my act together or I'll be condemned to a diet of salads and omelettes, which I like, but if that's all you're eating, it's pretty boring.

**Speaker 2:** Did you know that there are about half a million vegans in the UK? That's people who don't eat any animal products at all. They reckon the number is growing because of teenagers on social media – like me! That's where I got links to videos which convinced me that it's the best option for animals, our planet and my health. I did a lot of research into what kinds of things to eat before I changed my diet. It's really easy to find vegans online who'll answer questions and give you advice. I've been given lots of useful tips, like you can eat chickpeas and spinach for iron — you know, to make up for the iron you'd get from meat in a conventional diet. I still really miss fried eggs and normal chocolate — oops, I mean non-vegan chocolate. My family have been supportive about the change, but I get teased a bit at school. Some people think that being a vegan is weird. Luckily I've got a lot of friends who tell them it's cool.

**Speaker 3:** I gave up eating meat a couple of years ago because at the time I was following a celebrity who was a veggie. Stupid reason, I know, but you see beautiful, glamorous people on Instagram and you want their lifestyle, so I became a vegetarian. I don't miss meat but I still eat fish sometimes, which sort of isn't really allowed. My main problem is that I'm not too keen on vegetables. My dad finds that hilarious. He's always going, 'How can you be a vegetarian if you don't like vegetables?' I do like chips, though, and tomato ketchup – they're made from vegetables, aren't they? I don't eat that much fruit either, apart from bananas. Anyway, but because my diet is a little on the unhealthy side, I take multivitamins every day. I also try and avoid rubbish like fizzy drinks and sweets. I don't think my diet's so bad. I feel pretty healthy.

**Speaker 4:** My whole family is vegetarian, so if you're brought up that way it seems perfectly normal. My parents are both good cooks and we had a very varied diet. We ate lots of international dishes: Italian, Indian, Middle Eastern and so on. I never really missed meat or fish, except when I went out with friends. When I was young I remember lots of birthday parties in hamburger places – that was a bit tricky! When you're young you never like being different. But later, quite a few people in my class at school became vegetarian, so I was no longer the odd one out. Anyway, now I've left home, I keep having lapses. I wouldn't admit it at first, but I have tried meat a couple of times and I'm getting to really like fish. I feel awful sometimes, but I love food and I want to experiment with everything. I haven't told my mum and dad – they'd be shocked!

**Speaker 5:** My main reason for becoming vegan was that I can't stand the way we treat animals – most

farms are run in such an inhumane way. I refuse to support factory farming. The treatment of hens is horrific, not to mention what they do to cows. So now I don't eat any animal products – no meat, obviously, but no eggs, milk or cheese either. And I don't eat fish, of course. When I first started to be a vegan, I found I was getting tired all the time, so I went to see a nutritionist and she said I wasn't getting enough protein. Now I'm a lot more careful and I eat lots of different nuts and seeds, and pulses – you know, dried beans, chickpeas and lentils. It's a bit time-consuming, buying and cooking special things, but now I feel really good. My family think I'm a bit weird, but they're gradually coming round to my lentil and rice specials!

**Listening skills practice: The benefits of sport – transcript**

Transcript for **The benefits of sport**

**Teacher:** Good morning, class

**Students' voices:** Morning, miss / Morning.

**Teacher:** So, today we're going to carry on with what we were talking about last class which are the advantages of doing sport on a regular basis. Let's start by seeing how much you remember about the benefits of sport. I'm going to ask you some questions and in your groups I'd like you to answer them. OK, so the first question is, can you remember three of the specific physical benefits sport offers to the human body that we discussed last class? OK, Group B. What do you think?

**Group B spokesperson:** Um, well we've got two.

**Teacher:** OK, let's hear them.

**Group B spokesperson:** We think that doing sport reduces high blood pressure and the chance of getting diabetes.

**Teacher:** Absolutely. OK, does anyone have any other advantages? Yes, Group D?

**Group D spokesperson:** Yeah, sport is good for your bones.

**Teacher:** That's right. It strengthens our bones, particularly while we are still growing. OK, we also discussed that sport can be good for our minds too because of the chemicals that our brains release when we exercise. Can anyone remember the name of these chemicals and how they make us feel? Mmm, Group A?

**Group A spokesperson:** Are they called euphoria?

**Teacher:** Not exactly. Anyone else? OK, Group B again.

**Group B spokesperson:** Endorphins and they make you feel euphoric or really happy.

**Teacher:** That's right. So sport can help us feel happy and put us in a good mood because of these chemicals that are present in our bodies when we exercise. It also improves our capacity to concentrate, which is why doing PE at school can actually help you do better in exams. OK, so that was basically what we covered last week and what we're going to move on to today is thinking about whether it's better for us to take part in individual or team sports. So let's have a quick show of hands to see what you think. Those who think it's better for us to do individual sports put up your hands. OK, thank you. And now those who think it's better to do a team sport? OK. Well, there are certain advantages to both individual and team sports, but, in my opinion, the benefits of team sport do seem to outweigh those of individual sport. Can you shout out a couple of examples of individual sports?

**Group C spokesperson:** Yeah, like, karate or swimming?



**Group D spokesperson:** And tennis.

**Teacher:** Good. Well, you won't be surprised to hear that in order to succeed in individual sport we need to have a fair amount of self-discipline to motivate ourselves, which is easier said than done for some people. However, with regular practice, it may be easier to see progress. Also, it's worth pointing out that our individual successes and failures are completely down to the individual, no one else. OK, I'd like you to have a think in your groups about the possible advantages of doing sport as part of a team as opposed to by yourself. OK, Group C. What have you come up with?

**Group C spokesperson:** Well, we were saying that it might be, like, easier to be more motivated to actually do a sport if you're in a team because you, like, you don't want to let anyone down, so you, like, always turn up for sports practice, you know, so you are sort of more committed to doing the sport.

**Teacher:** That's a very good point. Yes, being a team member certainly helps people feel motivated and make an effort to turn up and play on a regular basis. Well done, Group C. Any other ideas? Group D?

**Group D spokesperson:** Err, because it's boring doing sport by yourself and it's more fun if you're with your mates.

**Teacher:** Absolutely! And the sense of being involved and belonging to a group is very positive for most people. Some experts actually believe that belonging to a group or a team makes us less likely to suffer from depression, as members develop positive bonds between them. And there are other benefits too. When you work as part of a team you are learning to work together and rely on each other. Everyone is responsible for the success of the team, so there's less pressure on an individual and consequently it's less stressful. And finally, can you think of any skills you develop when you work as part of a team? Group A?

**Group A spokesperson:** Well, you need communication skills to talk to everyone on the team.

**Teacher:** Yes, very good, Group A. Any more? Group C?

**Group C spokesperson:** Err ... could it be, like, negotiation skills?

**Teacher:** Yes, you need to communicate and negotiate with your fellow teammates. You also develop trust as you work together with others to achieve a common aim or goal, and all these skills are ones that come in handy in other areas of your life as well as in sport. So you can see that there are many all-round benefits to being in a team. However, perhaps, at the end of the day, the most important point is that you choose a sport you actually like, regardless of whether it's an individual or team sport.

**Listening skills practice: The fear factor – transcript**

Transcript for **The fear factor**

**Extract one**

**You will hear part of an interview with an expert on phobias.**

**Interviewer:** So what exactly is a phobia?

**Expert:** Well, nearly everyone fears something, but when the fear becomes exaggerated and irrational, it's a phobia, which is the most common form of anxiety disorder. There are many types of what are known as specific or simple phobias. Common phobias include a fear of animals, particularly spiders, a fear of darkness or nyctophobia, or perhaps a fear of clowns, flying or a fear of public speaking. Now, you may not be keen on some of these things I've just mentioned, but most of us find a way to cope with the situation and don't let it interfere with our daily lives. However, if you have a phobia of one of these things, you may suffer from symptoms such as an increased heart rate, dizziness, excessive sweating or even a panic attack. You might end up going to extreme lengths to change your daily life so as not to come into contact with the thing or situation that causes your phobia. For example, imagine a friend of yours has a pet tarantula. If you're not a huge fan of spiders you may not enjoy spending time in his house, but most of us would put up with it. However, if you are an arachnophobia sufferer, you would probably refuse to visit him at home altogether. So you can see how phobias can have a real impact on our social relationships.

**Interviewer:** And why do people suffer from phobias?

**Expert:** Well, there are a couple of causes. If a child grows up with a parent who suffers from a phobia, the child is far more likely to develop the same irrational fear. Also, many phobias are actually triggered by a traumatic past event, often during childhood. So, perhaps an encounter with a vicious dog or falling into a swimming pool and nearly drowning as a child could feasibly develop into cynophobia, a fear of dogs, or aquaphobia, a fear of water.

**Extract two**

**Listen to part of a radio programme in which someone is talking about why people like to feel scared.**

**Interviewer:** There are many of us out there who actually enjoy the sensation of feeling scared to death on a roller coaster or delight in sitting on the edge of your seat during a horror movie and, Jan, you can explain to us why this is the case.

**Jan:** Yes, that's right. As you say, millions of us choose to put ourselves in situations where we consciously know we are going to feel scared, like going on rides at a theme park. The reaction we have when we put ourselves into these situations – you know, the rapid heartbeat or sweaty palms – is in part similar to that when we're faced with a real threat. What happens in those cases is that the body reacts to the danger with what we call a 'fight

or flight' response. So, when the body detects real danger, it closes off any non-essential systems such as critical thought and reacts with automatic responses which enable us to either put up a fight or run away. We get a sudden huge rush of energy and at the same time the body is flooded with chemicals which protect us from feeling pain. The difference between a situation of real danger and being on a theme park ride is the context. So although we feel a certain sense of fear, we know deep down that the situation does not really pose a true threat and so this energy and lack of pain without any real danger allow us to experience a sense of euphoria or an adrenaline rush, which explains why we are able to scream and giggle in quick succession.

**Extract three**

**You will hear some people talking about their fears and phobias.**

**Ben:** So, have you got any phobias, Liz?

**Liz:** I'm not sure if I'd call it a phobia as such, but I absolutely hate needles and injections. Even the thought of them makes me feel queasy. When I have to have a blood test, I can't bring myself to watch and I feel faint and dizzy, and if I'm watching TV and there's a scene with someone injecting themselves, I can't watch. I think it started when I was little and I went to the doctor with my mum and my big sister. The doctor gave my sister an injection and I was watching ... I started to feel faint and I passed out on the floor of the doctor's office.

**Abi:** Oh no! Well, my greatest fear is clowns. There's actually an official name for it, coulrophobia, I think. I don't know what it is about them exactly, but they just freak me out, they're so weird. I've always hated them since I was a kid from birthday parties and the circus and things. They don't look at all happy to me even with a big painted smile. They look sad and scary, even a bit sinister.

**Liz:** What about you, Ben? Are you scared of anything?

**Ben:** No, course not!

**Abi:** Well, apart from heights.

**Ben:** That's true, I can't look out of the window past the fourth floor.

**Abi:** And lifts ...

**Ben:** OK, yeah, and lifts. I hate getting inside lifts. I'll always take the stairs if I can. I don't know, they just make me feel uneasy. And, well, I get really nervous if I ever have to speak in public. I start sweating and my mind just goes blank. It's so embarrassing ... that's pretty normal, isn't it?

**Liz:** Of course!

**Abi:** Sure.

**Listening skills practice: War's silver lining – transcript****War's silver lining**