**Libraries**

**Do you often go to the library?**

Much more than I used to, actually. In my hometown, the local library is quite far-off, but up my neck of the woods now, it's just over the road. So I'll go there maybe once or twice a month. I think that's quite often.

**Did you go to a library when you were a child?**

I vividly remember we would go there with our childminder. I used to pick up a load of books on complex topics, just because I liked the pictures. It must be where I get the vocabulary from.

**What do you usually do in the library?**

I like to poke around the lifestyle and science fiction sections in the hopes of finding something interesting. And I've looked up information on local authors for various projects. The librarians there are actually quite helpful if we talk about my library where I live now.

**What kind of people go to libraries to work or study?**

Based on a limited number of visits I've made recently, it's hard to pin down exactly who goes there. I suppose, my best guess would be the, there are people who are interested in finding out about different subjects connected to what they work with or what they study.

**Are libraries popular in your country?**

R: Well, I'm hardly an expert, but if I were to guess, I'd say they're probably relatively more popular now than they used to be in the recent past. Because people are trying to save money by taking books out on loan, rather than by buying them. Just because we have this cost of living crisis. However, I don't think that they're as popular as they were back in the day, like if we're talking like in the 1950s and 60s. Just because people still have more money than they did back then, but still, they're using various cost-cutting measures and so libraries will play a part in that.

**Local (adjective)**  - from, existing in, serving, or responsible for a small area, especially of a country.

**Far** - off (adj.)

**This, our, etc. neck of the woods (idiom)**  - this, our, etc. part of a particular area.

**Vividly (adverb)**  - in a way that is very clear, powerful, and detailed in your mind.

**Childminder (noun)**  - a person whose job is to take care of other people's children in her or his own home.

**Load (noun)**  - a lot.

**Complex (adjective)**  - difficult to understand or find an answer to because of having many different parts.

**To poke around/about (phrasal verb)**  - to search through something, esp. without permission or without any particular idea of what you might find.

**To pin down something (phrasal verb)**  - to discover the exact details about something.

**On loan (phrase)**  - if a football player is on loan, they are playing for a different club for a limited period of time.

**Cost** - cutting (noun)

**Happiness**

**Absence (noun)**  - the non

**Ill feeling (noun)**  - angry feelings between people

**Abundance (noun)**  - a very large quantity of something

**Exhilaration (noun)**  - a feeling of excitement, happiness, or elation.

**Gut feeling (noun)**  - a feeling that you are certain is right, although you can give no good reason why.

**Awry (adj.)**  - away from the usual or expected course; amiss.

**To conflate (verb)**  - combine (two or more sets of information, texts, ideas, etc.) into one.

**Impetus (noun)**  - a force that helps something to happen or develop more quickly

**Glimmer (noun)**  - a soft weak light that is not steady

**To air on the side of caution (idiom)**  - to be especially careful rather than taking a risk or making a mistake.

**To scaffold (verb)**  - to support something with a framework.

**Feisty (adj.)**  - (of a person, typically one who is relatively small) lively, determined, and courageous.

**Limelight (noun)**  - the focus of public attention.

**To crave (verb)**  - to feel a powerful desire for (something).

**To get back in the saddle (idiom)**  - to return to something after an absence; to make another attempt after suffering a failure; to return to something that is familiar.

**To pinpoint (verb)**  - find or identify with great accuracy or precision.

**To tackle (verb)**  - make determined efforts to deal with (a problem or difficult task).

**Under the radar (idiom)**  - not getting attention : unnoticed.

**Noise**

**Do you mind different noises Rory?**

Not if they are overly intrusive, no. Of course, something like a loud bang will give anyone quite a fright or jolt them out of whatever they're doing. But generally, I'm quite good at filtering out distractions.

**What types of noise do you come across in your daily life?**

Well, I teach kids so screaming and loud chattering are quite common from day to day. And during the commute there are the normal traffic signs. I suppose lastly at the gym, there's the usual clattering, crashing and grunting as people go about their routines as well.

**Intrusive (adj.)**  - affecting someone in a way that annoys them and makes them feel uncomfortable.

**Jolt (verb)**  - to (cause something or someone to) move suddenly and violently.

**Commute (verb)**  - to make the same journey regularly between work and home.

**Clatter (verb)**  - to make continuous loud noises by hitting hard objects against each other, or to cause objects to do this.

**Grunt (verb)**  - (of a person) to make a short, low sound instead of speaking, usually because of anger or pain.

**Despise (verb)**  - to feel a strong dislike for someone or something because you think that that person or thing is bad or has no value.

**Go off (phrasal verb)**  - if a device goes off, it starts to ring loudly or make a loud noise.

**Small businesses**

**Are there many small businesses in your area?**

Well, it's a village. So everything we have here is a small family-owned business. I think the only exceptions are the co-op, the distillery up the road and the factory down the road.

**Do you prefer shopping in big companies or in small shops?**

Honestly, I don't have a preference. I mean, whatever is readily available works for me. I mean, on the one hand, big companies tend to have more discounts. I mean you can bulk-buy there. But smaller companies are better for the local economy. So there's, there's positives and negatives to both.

**Why do some people prefer to shop in small businesses?**

Well, it's similar to what I said, I imagine perhaps they like supporting the local economy and large companies can be somewhat predatory in their business practices. It might also be the only choice they have. I mean, if you live in a small rural community, then all you might have is your local shop that's owned by one of the families there.

**Would you ever like to run your own small business?**

I already do. I run this podcast with three of my colleagues and I teach English privately online. And frankly, I'd rather do that than work for some large institution. It gives me greater flexibility and it fits in with my belief in localism and, well, like I said, being flexible.

**When was the last time you bought something from a small business?**

Oh, that's a good question, actually. I'd have to think about it for a bit. I think probably the other day, I actually picked up some food from the local butcher's here. They're actually pretty good. They've won lots of awards for their work. Even though it's a small company. I think it only has like three or four people working there.

**Co** - op (noun)

**Distillery (noun)**  - a factory where strong alcoholic drinks are produced by the process of distilling.

**To bulk** - buy (verb)

**Predatory (adj.)**  - a predatory person or organization tries to get something that belongs to someone else.

**Flexibility (noun)**  - the ability to change or be changed easily according to the situation.

**Localism (noun)**  - the idea that people should have control over what happens in their local area, that local businesses should be supported, and that differences between places should be respected.

**To fit in (phrasal verb)**  - if one thing fits in with another thing, they look pleasant together or are suitable for each other.

**Keys**

**Do you always bring many keys with you?**

Well, to be honest, the only keys I carry are my front door key and my garage key, since those are the only things in my home that have locks on them. So that's all I need.

**Keepsake (noun)**  - a small present, usually not expensive, that is given to you by someone so that you will remember that person.

**Padlock (noun)**  - a small metal lock with a U

**Locksmith (noun)**  - a person who repairs and/or makes locks and supplies keys.

**Keypad (noun)**  - a small set of keys with numbers on them used to operate a television, phone, calculator, etc., or the keys with numbers on them usually found on the right side of a computer keyboard.

**Keychain (noun)**  - a chain with keys.

**To dig something out (phrasal verb)**  - to find something that you have not seen or used for a long time.

**To lock someone out (phrasal verb)**  - to prevent someone from entering a building or room by locking the door.

**Landlady (noun)**  - a woman who is paid rent by people for the use of a room, building, or piece of land that she owns.

**Trustworthy (adj.)**  - able to be trusted.

**To nip (verb)**  - to go somewhere quickly or be somewhere for only a short time.

**T-Shirts**

**Do you own many T-shirts?**

Well, most of my wardrobe is either short or long-sleeved shirts and T-shirts. And they're predominantly black. I can never quite pull off anything else. And well, they're easier to shop for actually, at least I find.

**Do you like T-shirts with pictures or prints?**

I used to love them as a way to make a fashion statement. But now, I've just come to realize that they come across as crass and tacky. I prefer plain colours now without any gaudy additions to them.

**How often do you wear T-shirts?**

I think I'd wear them almost every day if I could. They're cheap and easy to buy and, well, they go with almost anything.

**Are T-shirts popular in your country?**

I think so, though not by themselves in the winter, since having exposed arms in cool temperatures is never a really good idea. Although, well, they're definitely a key item in every kind of casual dress code there might be.

**When is it appropriate to wear a T-shirt in your country?**

Well, almost always, unless you're in a business or a smart casual situation. And even then you might be able to get away with it, unless you had tattoos or scarification that needs to be covered up, for example.

**Wardrobe (noun)**  - all of the clothes that a person owns.

**Short** - sleeved (adj.)

**Long** - sleeved (adj.)

**Predominantly (adverb)**  - mostly or mainly.

**To pull off something (phrasal verb)**  - to succeed in doing something difficult or unexpected.

**Fashion statement (noun)**  - clothes that you wear or something else that you own in order to attract attention and show other people the type of person you are.

**Crass (adj.)**  - offensive in manner or style.

**Tacky (adj.)**  - of cheap quality or in bad style.

**Plain (adj.)**  - not decorated in any way; with nothing added.

**Gaudy (adj.)**  - unpleasantly bright in colour or decoration.

**Exposed (adj.)**  - uncovered so that it can be seen.

**Casual (adj.)**  - casual clothes are not formal or not suitable for special occasions.

**Smart casual (adj.)**  - (of clothing) neat and stylish, but not too formal, especially when this is the accepted way of dressing for a particular situation, place, or social occasion.

**Scarification (noun)**  - the process of making small cuts in someone's skin, especially for cultural reasons.

**Outer space and stars**

**Do you enjoy looking at the stars?**

When I get the chance I do. And it's not just the stars either. It's the planets and the nebulae. I used to love, and I still do, sitting on the decking at three o'clock in the morning on a Saturday just watching them for ages.

**Have you ever learned about outer space and stars?**

Well, we had a few inputs in school, but most of what I know about, well, celestial events and heavenly bodies I've read or watched for myself. I don't think primary or even secondary school children probably need to learn that much about coronal mass ejection or star formation. So it's really something that you have to pursue for yourself outside of the basics, like, you know, what the order of the planets is in the solar system, for example.

**Are you interested in films about outer space and stars?**

Oh, absolutely. I love hard and soft science fiction. So anything about extraterrestrials, and space travel is right up my avenue. I really like the plots of films like "Arrival" and "Contact". But I also like the mindless fun of "Starship Troopers" as well.

**Can you see many stars at night where you live?**

Well, the light pollution here is quite low. So you don't just see stars and constellations, you can see planets like Mars. And if you move further out to the village where there's almost no people, then you can even see things like the Orion Nebula, for example. I can't think of anything else that you could see, but they're all up there twinkling away. So that's great.

**Would you ever like to go into space?**

Well, with the current level of technology, probably not. I mean, if we had a space elevator or a skyhook, for example, to make it safer, then I would absolutely be down for that. But I'm not strapping myself to the top of a rocket filled with fuel and setting it on fire to get there. That's just, it just seems really dangerous.

**What would you do if you had the chance to go into space?**

Well, it would be cool to see the Earth from orbit and just see what everything looks like. I'd also really like to do a spacewalk. Just for the novelty in the risk that's involved, to be honest. I doubt I'd make the astronaut fitness requirements though.

**Nebula (noun)**  - a cloud of gas or dust in space, appearing either bright or dark.

**Nebulae (plural noun)**  - plural of nebula.

**Input (noun)**  - help, ideas, or knowledge that someone gives to a project, organization, etc.

**Celestial (adj.)**  - of or from the sky or outside this world.

**Heavenly body (noun)**  - any object existing in space, especially a planet, star, or the moon.

**Coronal mass ejection (noun)**  - are large expulsions of plasma and magnetic field from the sun's atmosphere.

**To pursue (verb)**  - to try to discover information about a subject.

**Hard and soft science fiction**  - hard sci

**Extraterrestrial (noun)**  - a creature from outside the planet Earth.

**Up/down your avenue/alley/street (idiom)**  - to be the type of thing that you are interested in or that you enjoy doing.

**Constellation (noun)**  - any of the groups of stars in the sky that seem from earth to form a pattern and have been given names.

**To twinkle (verb)**  - (of light or a shiny surface) to shine repeatedly strongly then weakly, as if flashing on and off very quickly.

**Orbit (noun)**  - the curved path through which objects in space move around a planet or star.

**Spacewalk (noun)**  - an act of moving around in space outside a spacecraft but connected to it.

**Jewellery**

**Bead (noun)**  - a small, coloured, often round piece of plastic, wood, glass, etc. with a hole through it. It is usually put on a string with a lot of others to make jewellery.

**Beaded (adj.)**  - decorated with beads.

**Bracelet (noun)**  - a piece of jewellery that is worn around the wrist or arm.

**Engagement ring (noun)**  - a ring, usually with a precious stone in it, that you give someone as a formal sign that you have decided to get married.

**To misplace (verb)**  - to lose something temporarily by forgetting where you have put it.

**Astray (adverb)**  - away from the correct path or correct way of doing something.

**To festoon (verb)**  - to decorate a room or other place for a special occasion by hanging coloured paper, lights, or flowers around it, especially in curves.

**Faff (noun)**  - something that takes a lot of effort or causes slight problems.

**Out and about (idiom)**  - active; doing the things you usually do.

**Necklace (noun)**  - a piece of jewellery worn around the neck, such as a chain or a string of decorative stones, beads, etc.

**To peruse (verb)**  - to read or look at something in a relaxed way.

**Chocolate**

**Sensation (noun)**  - the ability to feel something physically, especially by touching, or a physical feeling that results from this ability.

**Aftermath (noun)**  - the period that follows an unpleasant event or accident, and the effects that it causes.

**Flavour (noun)**  - how food or drink tastes, or a particular taste itself.

**To put someone on the spot (idiom)**  - if you put someone on the spot, you cause them embarrassment or difficulty by forcing them at that moment to answer a difficult question or make an important decision.

**Sizeable (adj.)**  - large.

**To overindulge (verb)**  - to allow yourself to have too much of something enjoyable, especially food or drink.

**To burn something off/up (phrasal verb)**  - to use or get rid of energy or fat by doing a lot of physical exercises.

**Hindsight (noun)**  - the ability to understand an event or situation only after it has happened.

**Diabetes (noun)**  - a disease in which the body cannot control the level of sugar in the blood.

**Diabetic (noun)**  - a person who has diabetes.

**Lactose intolerance (noun)**  - the inability to digest lactose (= a substance in milk).

**Connoisseur (noun)**  - a person who knows a lot about and enjoys one of the arts, or food, drink, etc. and can judge quality and skill in that subject.

**Texture(noun)**  - the quality of something that can be decided by touch; the degree to which something is rough or smooth, or soft or hard.

**To get hooked on (someone or something) (idiom)**  - to become addicted to a particular substance or activity.

**History**

**Fast food**

**Bland (adj.)**  - not having a strong taste or character or not showing any interest or energy.

**Empty calories (plural noun)**  - energy from food containing no nutrients (= substances that keep you healthy).

**In a pinch (idiom)**  - something that you can do in a pinch can be done if it is really necessary, but it will be difficult, not perfect, or not what you would really like.

**At the end of the day (idiom)**  - something that you say before you give the most important fact of a situation.

**Portion (noun)**  - the amount of a particular food that is served to one person, especially in a restaurant or a shop that sells food ready to be eaten.

**Cutlery (noun)**  - knives, forks, and spoons used for eating food.

**Tasteless (adj.)**  - having no flavour.

**Hard to swallow (idiom)**  - difficult to believe.

**Undercooked (adj.)**  - not cooked enough.

**Overcooked (adj.)**  - cooked more than enough.

**Aroma (noun)**  - a strong, pleasant smell, usually from food or drink.

**Chipper (noun)**  - a fish and chips shop, or more generally a cheap fast food outlet, typically selling chips and other deep

**Counterproductive (adj.)**  - having an effect that is opposite to the one intended or wanted.

**Rigid (adj.)**  - stiff or fixed; not able to be bent or moved.

**To indulge (verb)**  - to allow yourself or another person to have something enjoyable, especially more than is good for you.

**Gulp down something (phrasal verb)**  - to eat or drink something quickly.

**Junk food (noun)**  - food that is unhealthy but is quick and easy to eat.

**Boring things**

**Do you often feel bored?**

Oh, I think my life is about as far from monotonous as you could get really. I mean, I do this podcast, and I teach, which is always entertaining since every day is never the same as the last. So yeah, I definitely don't worry about boredom.

**Do you think school is boring?**

I suppose it depends what you mean. As a teacher, I'd say it's more tiring than boring. As a student, it probably gets a bit humdrum if you're doing the same thing again and again.

**What kinds of things would make you feel bored?**

Well, when people repeat themselves, especially in meetings. It's not great. It really gets on my nerves, actually. I get that maybe people might not pick up on things initially. But if you just repeat the same thing again and again, then it gets pretty tedious after a while, to be honest with you. Or if conversations always have the same theme, like someone who constantly talks about themselves. Although the irony of me saying that on this podcast, where I only talk about myself is probably quite obvious, or it should be.

**What would you do if you felt bored?**

Well, the context is important. If it's a meeting, well, I usually try to lean forward and make it looks like I'm listening, while like, while doodling or taking notes in my notebook. And that usually does a convincing enough job of, well, like I say, convincing people that I'm not bored. If it's at a party, though, I have a very bad habit of saying that I'm bored, just announcing this out loud. Well, that's not happened in a while. But I don't think it's the best way to deal with boredom, to be honest with you.

**Are you more bored now than when you were young?**

I think I was bored more in the past compared to now, to be honest with you. Because, well, first of all, I couldn't do anything about it because I was a child. And when you're a child, you have less freedom of action. And now, there is a wider range of distractions to choose from. And you have the freedom of action to access them, well, now that I'm a grown-up. So I would definitely say that I used to be more bored than I am now. Definitely.

**Have you always found the same things boring?**

Well, I've always found unengaging people in conversations pretty boring, to be honest with you. And I always call them on it as well, because it's not that difficult to hold a conversation or to create interest. You just share something about yourself and create a space for someone to either share something about themselves, or to ask a question. And that's not hard. So I don't understand why boring people subject others to that.

**What do you think will bore you in the future?**

Well, anything connected to technology will always bore me to tears. It just doesn't really appeal to me. And of course, anything that Vanya has to say about me taking my job seriously, because he knows that it's hard for me. I'm sorry, Vanya. I'm not sorry, Vanya.

**Monotonous (adj.)**  - not changing and therefore boring.

**Humdrum (adj.)**  - having no excitement, interest, or new and different events.

**To get on someone's nerves (idiom)**  - to annoy someone a lot.

**To pick up on sth (phrasal verb)**  - to notice something that other people have not noticed.

**Tedious (adj.)**  - boring.

**To doodle (verb)**  - to draw pictures or patterns while thinking about something else or when you are bored.

**Distraction (noun)**  - something that prevents someone from giving their attention to something else.

**Engaging (adj.)**  - pleasant, attractive, and charming

**Unengaging (verb)**  - not wanting to become involved, or have contact, with someone or something.

**To call someone on something (phrasal verb)**  - to point out that someone is doing something wrong.

**To subject someone/something to something (verb)**  - to make someone or something experience an unpleasant or worrying thing.

**To bore (verb)**  - to make someone lose interest

**Bored to death/tears (idiom)**  - completely bored.

**To appeal (verb)**  - to interest or attract someone.

**Reading**

**Morning Time**

**Do you like to get up early in the morning?**

Well, I would definitely say I'm an early riser. I get up at 5:30 every morning and the hopes of getting more done. And I certainly think it makes me more productive.

**What's your morning routine?**

Well, that depends on the day, but nothing terribly out of the ordinary. I mean, on the average weekday, if we're talking about the average weekday, then I get up, I work out, and I study languages for a few minutes, fire off some emails and then get stuck in with the main parts of the day.

**Early/late riser (noun)**  - a person who usually gets out of bed early/late in the morning.

**Out of the ordinary**  - unusual.

**To fire off sth (phrasal verb)**  - to write something quickly, esp. when you are angry.

**To get stuck in (idiom)**  - to start doing something enthusiastically.

**Energetic (adj.)**  - having or involving a lot of energy.

**To function (verb)**  - to work or operate.

**Active (adj.)**  - busy with a particular activity.

**Writing**

**Extended (adj.)**  - long or longer than usual.

**To file (verb)**  - to store information in a careful and particular way.

**Handwritten (adj.)**  - written using your hand rather than printed by a machine.

**To type sth up (phrasal verb)**  - to use a keyboard to make a printed copy of something that was written by hand.

**To loathe (verb)**  - to hate someone or something.

**To jot sth down (phrasal verb)**  - to write something quickly on a piece of paper so that you remember it.

**Entry (noun)**  - a single written item in a list or collection of records.

**Journal (noun)**  - a written record of what you have done each day, sometimes including your private thoughts and feelings

**To unburden yourself**  - to free yourself of something that is worrying you, by talking about it to someone.

**Tedious (adj.)**  - boring.

**Hair**

**Do you like going to the hairdressers?**

Well, I'm sort of in two minds about this one, because while it is nice to have a sort of short cut and get all the pampering that goes with hair, I always feel a bit sad afterward because it's so short, and I always think my hair looks really good with a side parting. And when it's been blow-dried into place.

**Do you want to change your hair colour?**

Well, I used to want to dye my hair and I actually did so quite frequently. But now I've come to terms with the fact that I'm a distinguished grey or I'm turning a distinguished grey. So that's not so bad. It could be much worse. I could be going bald, and I'm definitely not. So it's pretty good. It's a good compromise.

**How often do you have a haircut?**

I used to aim for about once a month. Although, to be honest, now after about eight weeks, I always think it's got a pretty decent length and it looks great when I wear it up. It's usually after the eight-week mark that I head off to the barber's and have it cut because it just gets unmanageable after that.

**How long have you had this haircut?**

About three weeks, I suppose. I went to my usual Turkish barber and they cut my hair along with doing everything like trimming my eyebrows, burning off the hair around my ears. And then... Oh yeah, they also decided that they would wax my nose hairs as well and do pore cleansing at the same time. Which sounds horrifying, but actually it's quite a nice refreshing feeling after it's finished.

**Have you had a haircut you didn't like?**

Oh, absolutely, yes. About four years ago, I got this really, really weird haircut. I don't even know what you call it. It was like a sort of fat Mohawk in the middle of my head and the sides were shaved. And that was not a good look. It's like one of the least sensible styles I ever had. And to make it worse, I didn't get my beard trimmed. I had it shaved as well. So it just it wasn't a good look.

**Hairdresser (noun)**  - a person who cuts people's hair and puts it into a style, usually working in a special shop, called a hairdresser's.

**To pamper (verb)**  - to give someone special treatment, making that person as comfortable as possible and giving them whatever they want.

**To blow** - dry (verb)

**To dye (verb)**  - to change the colour of something using a special liquid.

**Distinguished (adj.)**  - used to describe a person, especially an older person, who looks formal, stylish, or wise.

**Grey (adj.)**  - having hair that has become grey or white, usually because of age.

**Bald (adj.)**  - with little or no hair on the head.

**To wear (verb)**  - to arrange your hair in a particular way.

**Barber (noun)**  - a man whose job is cutting men's hair.

**Barber's (noun)**  - a shop where a barber works.

**Unmanageable (adj.)**  - impossible to deal with or manage.

**To trim (verb)**  - to make something tidier or more level by cutting a small amount off it.

**Wax (noun)**  - a solid substance containing a lot of fat that becomes soft and melts when warm.

**To wax (verb)**  - to put a thin layer of wax on the surface of something, either to make it waterproof or to improve its appearance.

**Pore (noun)**  - a very small hole in the skin of people or other animals, or a similar hole on the surface of plants or rocks.

**Cleansing (adj.)**  - used to describe something that cleans or is used for cleaning.

**Horrifying (adj.)**  - very shocking.

**Haircut (noun)**  - the style in which someone's hair is cut, or an occasion of cutting the hair.

**Mohawk (noun)**  - a hairstyle, often worn in punk fashion, in which the hair is removed from the sides of the head and a central strip is made to stand up from the head.

**To shave (verb)**  - to remove hair from the body, especially a man's face, by cutting it close to the skin with a razor, so that the skin feels smooth.

**Sensible (adj.)**  - based on or acting on good judgment and practical ideas or understanding.

**Cooking**

**To whip something up (phrasal verb)**  - to make food or a meal very quickly and easily.

**Ready meal (noun)**  - a meal cooked and bought at a shop but taken somewhere else, often home, to be heated and eaten.

**Scrambled eggs (plural noun)**  - eggs mixed with a little milk and mixed again as they are being fried.

**To bring someone/something together (phrasal verb)**  - to combine a number of people, things, or activities in one place, under one title, for one purpose, etc.

**To pick up (phrasal verb)**  - to learn a new skill or language by practising it rather than being taught it.

**To glance (verb)**  - to give a quick short look.

**Cookbook (noun)**  - a book that explains how to prepare particular dishes.

**First port of call (idiom)**  - the first place where one stops to visit, accomplish something, or begin a process.

**Latterly (adverb)**  - recently.

**Cook (noun)**  - someone who prepares and cooks food.

**Household (adj. [before noun])**  - relating to a house or flat and the people who live there.

**Chore (noun)**  - a job or piece of work that is often boring or unpleasant but needs to be done regularly.

**Tick list (noun)**  - a list of jobs you tick when they are done.

**Housekeeper (noun)**  - a person, especially a woman, whose job is to organize another person's house and deal with cooking, cleaning, etc.

**Prohibitively (adverb)**  - in a way that is too expensive or too much.

**Technology**

**Do you like to use new technology?**

I think it's safe to say that technology has always been seen by me as much more of a curse than it is a blessing. I always struggled to get to grips with it.

**What technology do you often use?**

I think my laptop has been used so regularly that some of the touchpad keys have started to, well, to wear down, really. Em, I'm just looking at it now, actually, there's a bit on it that's begun to get rubbed off. So I'm obviously never away from it, really.

**What electronic devices have you bought lately?**

Actually, this was something that was discussed recently at work. I was talking to people about how I bought a microwave and a hoover, or a vacuum cleaner.

**Is there any technology you want to buy?**

Not overly, other than the more sought-after items like laptops and phones, those kinds of things that need to be replaced every couple of years. Oh, I also fancy getting some new earphones as well, and a new charger pack, but they're also just replacements for things which have been worn out over time.

**What are the benefits of using technology?**

Well, I suppose the one that is most often mentioned in conversation is the increased access to information. But there's also things like portability, increased efficiency of work processes, so the benefits are endless. Although, some would argue the disadvantages are as well.

**Come/get to grips with something (idiom)**  - to make an effort to understand and deal with a problem or situation.

**Touchpad (noun)**  - a special area on a laptop or other computer that you touch in order to move the cursor or give an instruction.

**Key (noun)**  - any of the set of moving parts that you press with your fingers on a computer keyboard, or musical instrument to produce letters, numbers, symbols, or musical notes.

**To wear down (phrasal verb)**  - if you wear something down or if it wears down, it becomes flatter or smoother as a result of constantly rubbing against something else.

**To rub off (phrasal verb)**  - to remove or be removed by rubbing.

**Hoover (noun)**  - a brand name for a vacuum cleaner.

**Vacuum cleaner (noun)**  - a machine that cleans floors and other surfaces by sucking up dust and dirt.

**Sought** - after (adj.)

**Replacement (noun)**  - the process of replacing something with something else.

**To wear out (phrasal verb)**  - to use something so much that it is damaged and cannot be used anymore, or to become damaged in this way.

**Portability (noun)**  - the quality of being light and small enough to be easily carried or moved.

**Efficiency (noun)**  - the good use of time and energy in a way that does not waste any.

**Social Media**

**User** - friendly (adj.) — a user

**Transportation**

**Unavoidable (adj.)**  - impossible to avoid.

**Route (noun)**  - a fixed path for regularly moving or delivering people or things.

**Necessity (noun)**  - the need for something.

**Green (adj.)**  - relating to the protection of the environment.

**Convenient (adj.)**  - suitable for your purposes and needs and causing the least difficulty.

**To line (verb)**  - to form a row along the side of something.

**Packed (adj.)**  - completely full.

**Unnavigable (adj.)**  - not able to be navigated.

**Scenario (noun)**  - a description of possible actions or events in the future.

**Traffic jam (noun)**  - a large number of vehicles close together and unable to move or moving very slowly.

**Congested (adj)**  - .too blocked or crowded and causing difficulties.

**Link (noun)**  - a connection between two things.

**Light railway (noun)**  - a railway system for transporting people around a particular city.

**Exorbitantly (adverb)**  - in a way that is much too much, or much too expensive

**Singing**

**Rory, do you like singing?**

Well, if it's done by professionals like choir singers or opera singers, then I'll listen. But if we're talking about me, then absolutely not, I'm completely tone-deaf.

**Choir (noun)**  - a group of people who sing together.

**Opera (noun)**  - a musical play in which most of the words are sung, or plays and music of this type.

**Tone** - deaf (adj.)

**Harmony (noun)**  - a pleasant musical sound made by different notes being played or sung at the same time.

**To harmonize (verb)**  - to add harmonies to a tune.

**Out of tune**  - singing or playing notes that are at the wrong pitch (= level) or that do not agree with others being sung or played.

**In tune**  - singing or playing notes that are at the right pitch (= level) or that agree with others being sung or played

**Rhythm (noun)**  - a strong pattern of sounds, words, or musical notes that is used in music, poetry, and dancing

**Gospel (noun)**  - a style of religious music originally performed by black Americans.

**Let alone**  - used after a negative statement to emphasize how unlikely a situation is because something much more likely has never happened.

**Upbeat (adj.)**  - upbeat music is fast and often sounds happy.

**Baroque (adj.)**  - relating to the heavily decorated style in buildings, art, and music that was popular in Europe in the 17th century and the early part of the 18th century.

**Range (noun)**  - all the musical notes that a singer can sing or a musical instrument is able to produce.

**Vocal cords (plural noun)**  - a pair of folds at the upper end of the throat whose edges move quickly backward and forwards and produce sound when air from the lungs moves over them.

**Geography**

**Have you ever studied geography at school?**

Well, yes. But if I'd had the chance, I probably wouldn't have taken it as a subject. I mean, I remember all of the stuff about tectonic plates, and earthquakes and other natural disasters. But to be honest, I don't think that stuff has any relevance for my life right now.

**Do you like geography?**

Well, like I said, it's not really my thing. If I'd been able to, I'd have dropped it as a subject, but I couldn't. So I just had to stick with it. All of the things about like erosion and plate movements. I mean, it's interesting, but doesn't have any direct relevance from my life. And, you know, if it doesn't really have much relevance, then it's not terribly interesting, or it's not terribly, it's not terribly engaging, is what I should say.

**Do you want to travel to a country because of its geographical conditions?**

Well, I think if I'd been able to, I would have traveled to South America to see the rainforest. But it seems like that will never happen now. And to be honest, even if I had gone I don't think I could handle the humidity.

**Are you good at reading maps?**

ell, I probably would have gotten into it if I'd had decent lessons at school and you know, much interest, but to be honest, I've never had much of an interest in either geography or orienteering. So it's not something I'm terribly good at.

**Tectonic plate (noun)**  - one of the parts of the earth's surface that move in relation to each other.

**Natural disaster (noun)**  - a natural event such as a flood, earthquake, or tsunami that kills or injures a lot of people.

**Stick with something/someone (phrasal verb)**  - to continue doing something or using someone to do work for you, and not stop or change to something or someone else.

**Erosion (noun)**  - the fact of soil, stone, etc. being gradually damaged and removed by the waves, rain, or wind.

**Relevance (noun)**  - the degree to which something is related or useful to what is happening or being talked about.

**Orienteering (noun)**  - an activity in which you have to find your way to somewhere on foot as quickly as possible by using a map and a compass.

**Birthdays**

**Rory, what do you usually do on your birthday?**

Well, I think every birthday is different. But if it's a nice day, then I usually go out with friends.

**Do you think it's important for you to celebrate your birthday?**

Well, I used to think so. But if it's a normal one, like my 33rd, then I don't really go out at all, to be honest. There doesn't seem to be much point.

**What did you do on your birthday when you were young?**

Well, when I was a child, we used to go to these sort of, oh, I don't know what you'd call them, specialist soft play centres. But later on in my teenage years, it was usually just house parties. And that was okay.

**How did you celebrate your last birthday?**

Well, if you mean my 33rd, then I didn't really celebrate it because I was at work. I suppose if we have to talk about any particular gift, it would have been the gift of sleep at the end of it. And I definitely got a lot of that. I did like my cake, though. Specifically the icing on it. It's really the only time you can justify something like that.

**What birthday presents do you like to get?**

Well, I'm pretty low-maintenance. So I usually just want books or clothes, to be honest with you. I don't really like odd or extravagant presents.

**How do children celebrate birthdays in your country?**

Well, if they're young, then I think they have parties at their houses or like the type of venues that I mentioned earlier. If they're older than I'm afraid I really have no idea what teenagers are doing these days. Sorry.

**Soft play (noun)**  - activities for small children in an indoor area with play equipment made from soft materials.

**Icing (noun)**  - a sweet food used to cover or fill cakes, made from sugar and water or sugar and butter.

**To justify (verb)**  - to give or to be a good reason for.

**Low** - maintenance (adj.)

**Extravagant (adj.)**  - extreme and unreasonable.

**Venue (noun)**  - the place where a public event or meeting happens.

**Weather**

**Dreary (adj.)**  - boring and making you feel unhappy.

**Progressive (adj.)**  - developing or happening gradually

**Damp (adj.)**  - slightly wet, usually in an unpleasant way

**Torrential rain (phrase)**  - very heavy rain.

**Scorching (adj.)**  - very hot.

**Oxymoron (noun)**  - two words used together, which mean two different or opposite things, such as 'bitter

**Cloudburst (noun)**  - a sudden heavy fall of rain.

**Humidity (noun)**  - a measurement of how much water there is in the air:

**Lethargic (adj.)**  - having little energy; feeling unwilling and unable to do anything.

**To soak up (phrasal verb)**  - to enjoy the effects or experience of something as much as possible.

**Heatwave (noun)**  - a period of time such as a few weeks when the weather is much hotter than usual.

**To vegetate (verb)**  - to live in a way that has no physical and mental activity.

**Names**

**Combination (noun)**  - a joining or merging of different parts or qualities in which the component elements are individually distinct.

**Embarrassing (adj.)**  - causing (someone) to feel awkward, self

**Middle name (noun)**  - a person's name placed after the first name and before the surname.

**Surname (noun)**  - a hereditary name common to all members of a family, as distinct from a forename or given name.

**Unusual (noun)**  - not habitually or commonly occurring or done.

**Puzzles**

**Rory, do you like puzzles?**

Well, not really. It's always difficult for me to follow the instructions, let alone make out any solutions. Although now that I think about it, it's not because they're not particularly engaging. It's just because I have other things on my mind, to be honest with you.

**Do you like doing word puzzles or number puzzles?**

Well, ideally, neither. But if I had to choose one, I suppose it would be word puzzles, because they most closely match up with my area of expertise, which is English. I suppose working out my finances is enough of a number puzzle for me.

**Did you like doing puzzles when you were a kid?**

I think I used to, but I had more time to finish them off back then. Whereas now I don't really because I've got all these jobs to do. Working out how to finish a Rubik's cube or to put together a jigsaw takes ages for me. So I don't really have the time for it.

**When do you do puzzles, during trips or when you feel bored?**

Well, I think the closest I get is when I'm setting them up for classes and I have to work out the solutions. If I had to choose then it would probably be during trips like filling out a crossword on a plane. If I didn't have a book and there was nothing else to do. But that's just an example.

**Let alone (phrase)**  - used after a negative statement to emphasize how unlikely a situation is because something much more likely has never happened.

**To make out (phrasal verb)**  - to deal with a situation, usually in a successful way.

**Engaging (adj.)**  - pleasant, attractive, and charming.

**To match up (phrasal verb)**  - If two pieces of information match up, they are the same.

**Expertise (noun)**  - a high level of knowledge or skill.

**To work out (phrasal verb)**  - to understand something or to find the answer to something by thinking about it.

**Jigsaw (noun)**  - a picture stuck onto wood or cardboard and cut into pieces of different shapes that must be joined together correctly to form the picture again.

**To set up (phrasal verb)**  - to arrange for an event or activity to happen.

**To fill out (phrasal verb)**  - to write or type information in spaces that are provided for it.

**Crossword (noun)**  - a game in which you write words that are the answers to questions in a pattern of black and white squares.

**Wordle (noun)**  - a brand name for an electronic image that shows words used in a particular piece of electronic text or series of texts. The words are different sizes according to how often they are used in the text.

**To rule something or someone out (phrasal verb)**  - to decide or say officially that something is impossible or will not happen, or that something or someone is not suitable.

**Snacks**

**Treat (noun)**  - a type of food that is eaten in addition to your usual meals, usually something sweet.

**Mid** - morning (noun)

**Peak (adj.)**  - peak times are the times when most people are using or doing something.

**Sugary (adj.)**  - containing sugar.

**Prominently (adverb)**  - in a way that can easily be seen or noticed.

**Savoury (adj.)**  - savoury food is salty or spicy and not sweet in taste.

**Art**

**Lost on one (phrasal verb)**  - to have little or no impact or effect on one; to not be valued, appreciated, or understood by one.

**Cars**

**Rory, do you like cars?**

Well, I like how they can get me where I need to be relatively quickly and efficiently compared to other forms of transport. If you mean do I like them like I would a hobby then no, I don't see that as a good use of my time.

**Add** - on (noun)

**Navigation (noun)**  - the act of directing a ship, aircraft, etc. from one place to another, or the science of finding a way from one place to another.

**Upkeep (noun)**  - the cost or process of keeping something, such as a building, in good condition.

**Breeze (noun)**  - something that is easy to achieve, often unexpectedly.

**Arduous (adj.)**  - difficult, needing a lot of effort and energy.

**To sandwich (verb)**  - to put something or someone in a small space between two other, usually bigger, things or people.

**To eject (verb)**  - to force someone to leave a particular place.

**Home Decoration**

**What kind of decoration do you prefer?**

To be honest, I wasn't aware there were different kinds until you asked that question. I'm a very go-with-the-flow person. So provided the decorations aren't too gaudy or in your face, then I really don't mind them or whatever style they are.

**Is there any artwork on the wall in your room?**

Yeah, there's some in my bedroom. I have a caricature of myself by a local artist. And there are three panels from a locally produced comic strip. And then there's various pieces of artwork or artefacts on display from various places I've been to as well.

**Would you use mirrors to decorate your room?**

I don't think I'm that much of a narcissist that I need mirrors everywhere. One is probably enough to check my outfit in the morning. And that's about it.

**When was the last time you redecorated your home?**

I don't think I've ever decorated in order to redecorate, to be honest. My parents have made a lot of changes to my childhood home over the years, which makes sense since the previous decor was done by a voodoo priestess. And I'm not even making that up. We used to find dolls' heads in the walls and in the garden.

**Will you redecorate it in the future?**

I don't have any plans to. I'm like the least aesthetically oriented person you've ever met. So I imagine my future home will be adorned with endless bookshelves and storage space. Anything else would be the responsibility of whatever poor unfortunate is living with me.

**Do people in your country enjoy redecorating their homes?**

I have absolutely no idea. I would imagine so. Given how often people post about things like that on social media. But that's just a few 100 people I know. I suppose it's better to be houseproud than not, though, so I would say yes.

**Go** - with

**Gaudy (adj.)**  - unpleasantly bright in colour or decoration.

**In your face (idiom)**  - shocking and annoying in a way that is difficult to ignore.

**Сaricature (noun)**  - (the art of making) a drawing or written or spoken description of someone that usually makes them look silly by making part of their appearance or character more noticeable than it really is.

**Comic strip (noun)**  - a short series of funny drawings with a small amount of writing, often published in a newspaper.

**Display (noun)**  - a collection of objects or pictures arranged for people to look at, or a performance or show for people to watch.

**Narcissist (noun)**  - someone who has too much admiration for himself or herself.

**Decor (noun)**  - the colour, style, and arrangement of the objects in a room.

**Priestess (noun)**  - a woman who performs religious duties in some religions that are not Christian.

**Aesthetically (adverb)**  - in a way that relates to the enjoyment or study of beauty.

**To adorn (verb)**  - to add something decorative to a person or thing.

**Houseproud (adj.)**  - very worried about your house being completely clean and tidy, and spending a lot of time making it so.

**Emails**

**Rory, do you often send emails?**

Well, probably every day, if not every other day I do. I often need to send documents to students or various organizations I work with and work for. So it definitely features in my day, I would say most of my days, probably.

**Is sending emails common in your country?**

I would imagine so, since you usually have to contact stores or colleagues via email. Messaging isn't very common by the telephone. Sending messages in a messenger is seen as a bit more informal and very few people text these days.

**Do you think sending emails will be more or less common in the future?**

I'm not sure. Like I said, about messengers, they're becoming certainly more popular. So maybe they will overtake email as the main form of communication. But we still have radios and telephones despite email existing, so I doubt they'll disappear entirely.

**Do you prefer texting or emails?**

Neither, to be honest. Texting is a bit outdated and emails are always so long. Messaging is much easier and more direct. You can even check messages have been read or whether there are not, in most cases.

**Do you prefer to have an email or a card for your birthday?**

I'm not overly fussed, to be honest. Just the fact someone took the time to send a message on my birthday is good enough for me. I suppose email is relatively more environmentally friendly by comparison, but that's about the only advantage I can think of.

**Will emails replace letters?**

Probably not entirely. Like I said before, radio didn't replace telegraph messages completely. And ebooks haven't replaced regular paper books. So they'll probably become more commonplace if they haven't already, but totally eclipsing letters is unlikely.

**To feature (verb)**  - to include someone or something as an important part.

**Via (preposition)**  - by way of, or by use of.

**To overtake (verb)**  - to go past something by being a greater amount or degree

**Outdated (adj.)**  - old

**Commonplace (noun)**  - happening often or often seen or experienced and so not considered to be special.

**To eclipse (verb)**  - to make another person or thing seem much less important, good, or famous.

**Collecting things**

**So, let's talk about collecting things. Do you collect things?**

I used to collect these Micro Machine toys a while back. That was when I was a child. They had them for all kinds of fictional and real military units. And I suppose civilian ones as well actually, aside from that, and the sort of library of books I have. I also have this assortment of different things I've picked up over the years. It's not exactly systematized or anything, nor was there any forethought to it. But I definitely have collected stuff.

**Assortment (noun)**  - a group of different types of something.

**To systematize (verb)**  - to plan a system for something.

**Forethought (noun)**  - the good judgment to consider the near future in your present actions.

**Keepsake (noun)**  - something that helps you remember a person, place, or occasion.

**Bits and pieces (idiom)**  - small things or jobs of different types.

**To overflow (verb)**  - when a place overflows, or people or things overflow from somewhere, some people or things have to come out because it cannot contain them all.

**Clear** - out (noun)

**Conversation piece (noun)**  - an unusual object that causes people to start talking.

**Interior (noun)**  - the inside part of something.

**Advertisements**

**Borderline (adj.)**  - between two different conditions, with the possibility of belonging to either one of them.

**Edgy (adj.)**  - unusual in a way that is fashionable or exciting.

**Offbeat (adj.)**  - unusual and strange and therefore surprising or noticeable.

**Supplement (noun)**  - something that is added to something else in order to improve it or complete it; something extra.

**Utopian (adj.)**  - relating to or aiming for a perfect society in which everyone works well with each other and is happy.

**Catchy (adj.)**  - (especially of a tune or song) pleasing and easy to remember.

**Store** - brand (noun.)

**Snazzy (adj.)**  - modern and stylish in a way that attracts attention.

**To cease (verb)**  - to stop something.

**Science**

**Superfluous (adj.)**  - unnecessary, especially through being more than enough.

**Meeting Places**

**Odd (adj.)**  - not happening often.

**To cut someone out (phrasal verb)**  - to not allow someone to share something or be included in something.

**Middleman (noun)**  - someone who communicates or makes arrangements between two people or groups who are unwilling or unable to meet or deal directly with each other. (in this context the meeting place is the middleman)

**Familiar (adj.)**  - easy to recognize because of being seen, met, heard, etc. before.

**Amusement park (noun)**  - a place where people can go to enjoy games, rides, and other activities.

**Numerous (adj.)**  - many.

**To opt (verb)**  - to make a choice, especially of one thing or possibility instead of others.

**Fallout (noun)**  - the unpleasant results or effects of an action or event.

**Play park (noun)**  - a public area designed for children to play in, usually outside and with special equipment.

**Sedate (adj.)**  - avoiding excitement or great activity and usually calm and relaxed.

**To wander (verb)**  - to walk around slowly in a relaxed way or without any clear purpose or direction.

**Old Buildings**

**Have you ever seen some old buildings in the city?**

Well, my hometown is hundreds of years old. So I see them almost every day, we've got a gallery in town called The McManus which has a kind of Gothic style to it. And that was built in the 1800s. There are also a few old jute mills, which were...sorry they've been repurposed, but they're kept in their original state because they're listed buildings.

**Do you think we should preserve all the buildings in cities?**

Assuming they're kept up to code, then I don't see why not. It's a good reminder of the past and a connection to culture that pretty much anyone can access. I visited one of the first mosques in Africa, which was preserved as part of their local history in that area. Though, it really should have been a UN Heritage Site or something like that.

**Do you prefer living in an old building or in a modern house?**

I don't mind, really. As long as the place is easy to keep, and it's not falling apart. I've lived in lots of places, and it doesn't seem too difficult to accomplish. But then maybe my standards are just really low.

**Are there any old buildings you would like to see in the future?**

I thought about that a lot. I don't think there are places I want to see. But there are people I would like to visit and cultures I want to experience. I don't think buildings mean much without the people around them. That's who they're for after all.

**How do old buildings affect the appearance of a place?**

I think that depends on their upkeep, really. If it's in a state of disrepair, then clearly it will bring down the reputation of the area. However, a well-maintained building can be a tourist attraction, or a piece of cultural heritage that anchors the area and its history.

**What aspects of culture do old buildings reflect?**

**To repurpose (verb)**  - to find a new use for an idea, product, or building.

**Listed building (noun)**  - a building of great historical or artistic value that has official protection to prevent it from being changed or destroyed.

**Bring up to code (phrasal verb)**  - to alter or improve something so that it meets building codes or regulations.

**World Heritage Site (noun)**  - a place, for example an area, a building, or a city, that has been put on a list by the organization UNESCO to say that it has special importance, and should be protected.

**Upkeep (noun)**  - the cost or process of keeping something, such as a building, in good condition.

**Well** - maintained (adj.)

**To anchor (verb)**  - to make something or someone stay in one position by fastening him, her, or it firmly; to fix something in one position.

**To infer (verb)**  - to form an opinion or guess that something is true because of the information that you have.

**To preserve (verb)**  - to keep something as it is, especially in order to prevent it from decaying or being damaged or destroyed.

**Sports Programmes**

**Rory, do you like watching sports programmes on TV?**

I'm afraid not. Though, if I had to watch something, it would be something like, I don't know, mixed martial arts or rugby. It's not something I have a lot of time to get emotionally invested in. Sorry.

**Do you like to watch live sports games?**

I think I've been to the sum total of one in my entire life, if we exclude the ones I've seen on TV. I'd rather be reading or writing I think.

**Who do you like to watch sports with?**

Uh, well, whenever I have, it's been friends and family. I couldn't say in any greater detail because it doesn't really stick out in my memory, to be honest.

**What was your favourite sport when you were a child?**

Oh, I was probably the least athletic child in the universe. I didn't play any sports at all. And I actually made an active effort to get out of PE class when I could. That's a bit unfortunate, really, since I really liked exercise in later life, but our PE classes were pretty dire. So I usually gave them the body swerve.

**What's the difference between watching sports live at the stadium and watching it on TV at home?**

Well, from my perspective, they're both equally boring. But if you're someone who's into those things, then I suppose being in a stadium allows you to feel part of the crowd and access the rush of seeing things with your own eyes. Whereas if something is on TV, the environment might be more comfortable and the view less easily obscured.

**Martial arts (plural noun)**  - a sport that is a traditional Japanese or Chinese form of fighting or defending yourself.

**To stick out (phrasal verb)**  - to be very noticeable because of being different.

**Athletic (adj.)**  - strong, healthy, and good at sports.

**Dire (adj.)**  - very serious or extreme.

**To give something a body swerve (idiom)**  - to avoid somethingю

**To obscure (verb)**  - to make something difficult to discover and understand.

**Sporting chance (noun)**  - if there is a sporting chance that something good will happen, it is possible that it will happen.

**Evening Time**

**Rory, do you like the morning or evening?**

Well, I suppose that'll depend entirely on how I'm feeling or what I'm doing. But generally speaking, I think I prefer the feeling of being more productive in the morning, and then having the whole day to do everything. So I definitely say that I'm a morning person.

**What do you usually do in the evening?**

Oh, I think I'm very boring. So I work until about 8:30. In the evening that is. Before getting ready for bed, and then I'll read until about half nine, so that I can fall asleep early and wake up early. That's on the weekday evenings at least.

**What did you do in the evening when you were a child?**

I don't think I used to stay up ridiculously late when I was much younger. Even when I was a child, I'd be up until 10 or 11 in the evening. I think what exactly I was doing changed over the years from watching cartoons to reading, to staying out late with friends. It's all coming back to bite me now, though, I think I'd definitely prefer my early bedtimes.

**Ridiculously (adverb)**  - in a way that is stupid or unreasonable and deserves to be laughed at.

**To stay out (phrasal verb)**  - to not come home at night, or to go home late.

**Fixed (adj.)**  - arranged or decided already and not able to be changed.

**Creature of habit**  - someone who always does the same thing in the same way.

**Mischief (noun)**  - behaviour, especially a child's, that is slightly bad but is not intended to cause serious harm or damage.

**Talents**

**Rory, do you have a talent or something you're good at?**

Well, I'm not sure if they could be considered talents in the traditional sense. But I'm reasonably good at organizing things and writing or storytelling, whenever the inspiration takes me. I like putting together plans and lists, and then I do a lot of free writing in my spare time. And of course, I've been telling a lot of stories to young people of late.

**Is it the same talent in your family?**

Well, my parents are rather good at organizing things and are notorious for their tick lists. So perhaps that's an inherited trait. They were also both journalists. And perhaps that's where the talent for storytelling comes from. Now that I think about it, my brothers are quite similar in that way too actually.

**Do you think your talent can be helpful for your future work?**

Well, I would certainly say so. It's already come in quite handy for teaching and writing books and articles. And I imagine it will do in the future when I have to put together plans and lessons and teach writing.

**Notorious (adj.)**  - famous for something bad.

**Inherited (adj.)**  - received from someone who has died.

**Trait (noun)**  - a particular characteristic that can produce a particular type of behaviour.

**Articulate (ad.)**  - able to express thoughts and feelings easily and clearly, or showing this quality.

**To assess (verb)**  - to judge or decide the amount, value, quality, or importance of something.

**Shift (noun)**  - a change in position or direction.

**Computers**

**Commonplace (adj.)**  - happening often or often seen or experienced and so not considered to be special.

**Exposure (noun)**  - the fact of experiencing something or being affected by it because of being in a particular situation or place.

**Explicitly (adverb)**  - in a way that is clear and exact.

**Reminiscent of sb/sth**  - making you remember a particular person, event, or thing.

**Embedded (adj.)**  - if an emotion, opinion, etc. is embedded in someone or something, it is a very strong or important part of him, her, or it.

**Immerse yourself in sth**  - to become completely involved in something.

**Watches**

**Rory, do you like to wear a watch?**

Only for work purposes and even then it's just to keep track of the time and maybe sometimes to time certain events with a stopwatch or alarm function. The rest of the time my wrists are actually rather bare.

**What kind of watches do you prefer?**

The cheap and cheerful kind. Lots of people wear smartwatches that can keep track of everything under the sun as if knowing your heart rate at any given moment is something you should be paying attention to. I just like the watches with a long lasting strap and battery, maybe with a backlight function and waterproofing for emergencies. But that's about it. It's not anything very comprehensive.

**Is a watch important for you?**

Like I said only for some parts of work when a clock isn't readily available. And even then it's less for me and more of the people I'm working with since we need to coordinate things.

**Have you ever got a watch as a gift?**

Yes, as it happens, I was given an analog one with a blank face and a sort of heavy leather strap by my grandmother on my 18th birthday. It's long since stopped working but I keep it as a reminder of her and our friendship.

**Why do some people wear expensive watches?**

I suppose it's a status symbol or a part of fitting in with a particular community that values such things. You can signal the kind of person that you are that way and it makes for an interesting conversation piece if you run out of things to talk about, I suppose.

**To keep track (idiom)**  - to make certain that you know what is happening or has happened to someone or something.

**Stopwatch (noun)**  - a watch that can be started and stopped in order to measure the exact time of an event, especially a sports event.

**Strap (noun)**  - a narrow piece of leather or other strong material used for fastening something or giving support.

**Comprehensive (adj.)**  - complete and including everything that is necessary.

**Status symbol (noun)**  - a thing that people want to have because they think other people will admire them if they have it.

**Timepiece (noun)**  - a clock or watch.

**Rational (adj.)**  - based on clear thought and reason.

**Sitting**

**Where's your favorite place to sit?**

I think that depends a lot on the weather. If it's a good day, then outside on the decking in the sunshine is quite relaxing. Otherwise, probably on the couch in the living room, I can put my feet up there and read or work quite comfortably.

**Do you like to sit on the sofa or on a chair?**

Well, that really is dependent on the chair. If it's one of those cheap sort of flimsy plastic ones, then it's probably not going to do my back any favors. But if it's like a padded or a form-fitting chair, or even a recliner, then I could probably spend hours on them. The same goes for coaches.

**Decking (noun)**  - a floor outside made of wood, or the long pieces of wood used to make this floor.

**Padded (adj.)**  - containing or consisting of a shaped piece of soft material, either for comfort or to give something a particular shape.

**Form** - fitting (adj.)

**Recliner (noun)**  - a chair in which you can lean back at different angles.

**Posture (noun)**  - the way in which someone usually holds their shoulders, neck, and back, or a particular position in which someone stands, sits, etc.

**Salient (adj.)**  - most noticeable or important.

**Online News**

**So Rory, tell me, do you often read the news online?**

Well, I certainly try to stay abreast of current events, and it doesn't get more current than the internet. I think I check it every day apart from Sundays, which is kind of my day off from the news.

**Abreast (adj.)**  - used to say that two or more people are next to each other and moving in the same direction.

**Current (adj.)**  - of the present time.

**State** - run (adj.)

**Unbiased (adj.)**  - able to judge fairly because you are not influenced by your own opinions.

**Essence (noun)**  - the basic or most important idea or quality of something.

**Columnist (noun)**  - someone who writes a regular article for a newspaper or magazine.

**Medium (noun)**  - a method of communication or entertainment, for example television, radio, or the internet.

**Flying**

**So Rory, let's talk about flying. Do you enjoy flying?**

No, actually. I was thinking about this the other day and I think I like the excitement leading up to the experience rather than the flying itself. It's always very cramped and noisy on a plane. So I'm not a huge fan.

**Are there many airlines in your country?**

Well, I'm no expert, though, if I were to guess then probably not. It's not like it's a major transport hub. We have two international airports, but that's nothing compared to a place like England or America.

**Have you ever flown anywhere?**

You could say that. Yes, I've traveled all over the world from the usual travel destinations like New York to, well, relative backwaters like Kurdistan and Timor. I think I prefer the places over the flying though.

**Where would you like to fly next time?**

I'd actually quite like to go gliding over the mountains again. I've done it once before. And I really liked the part where the pilot let me fly the glider. If you mean somewhere more distant, though, then I quite like the idea of going to Croatia. Though, that's because of the people and the culture, not the thought of flying there.

**Are you scared of flying?**

Only if I'm the one doing the piloting. There's so much responsibility and, well, so much that could go wrong. But generally, I'm fine with it. I just wouldn't do all the time, if I could help it.

**Will you fly more in the future?**

**Lead up to sth (phrasal verb)**  - if a period of time or series of events leads up to an event or activity, it happens until that event or activity begins.

**Cramped (adj.)**  - not having enough space or time.

**Hub (noun)**  - the central or main part of something where there is most activity.

**Backwater (noun)**  - a place that does not change because it is not influenced by new ideas or events that happen in other places.

**Glider (noun)**  - an aircraft that has long fixed wings and no engine and flies by gliding.

**Distant (adj.)**  - far away.

**Daily Routine**

**So, Rory, what's your daily routine like?**

Well, probably more regular in some ways and less so in others. At least I would say. I always get up and go to bed at roughly the same times, and I always do some exercise and make breakfast in similar ways. That being said, I also do different things for work each day. Sometimes I write or teach classes and other days I'll create things for social media, or do my university work.

**Have you ever changed your routine?**

Oh, absolutely. When I switched jobs, so started, well, going to bed earlier, and getting up earlier. And I added in visits to the gym in the last few years. The regularity gives some meaning and reliability to life, which is usually at least a little bit chaotic.

**What's your favorite time of the day?**

The mornings. I always get so much more done. I can answer messages and work out and work on various projects. To be honest, by the afternoon, I'm relatively spent, though, I still get things done, just not at the same rate. I'm definitely a morning person in this respect.

**What do you usually do at this time?**

Well, like I said, all the big things for the day, whether it's preparing materials, or organizing things with students and colleagues, I always feel more of a sense of accomplishment at this time of the day compared to the others as well.

**How do you organize your study time?**

Well, that's less regular and done on a more ad hoc basis, to be honest. I wish I could do it more regularly, but I just do, well, what I can and when I can in that respect. It seems to work well so far, though.

**Regular (adj.)**  - happening or doing something often.

**Regularity (noun)**  - the fact of something happening or being done often.

**Reliability (noun)**  - the quality of being able to be trusted or believed because of working or behaving well.

**Chaos (noun)**  - a state of total confusion with no order.

**Chaotic (adj.)**  - in a state of chaos.

**Spent (adj.)**  - something that is spent has been used so that it no longer has any power or effectiveness.

**Ad hoc**  - made or happening only for a particular purpose or need, not planned before it happens.

**Basis (noun)**  - a basis is also a way or method of doing something.

**Studies**

**Postgrad (adj.)**  - used to refer to university studies or students at a more advanced level than a first degree.

**Lecturer (noun)**  - someone who teaches at a college or university.

**The fount of all knowledge, gossip, wisdom, etc.**  - the person or place from which all information on a particular subject comes.

**Mischievous (adj.)**  - behaving in a way, or describing behaviour, that is slightly bad but is not intended to cause serious harm or damage.

**Purpose** - built (adj.)

**To be surplus to requirements**  - if someone or something is surplus to requirements, they are not needed.

**Accommodation**

**Okay, let's talk about accommodation. Do you live in a house or a flat?**

I've been living in a three-bedroom house for the last year now, about eight months to be exact actually.

**What do you like the most about it?**

Well, I love the local area, it's next to the beach. But if you walk for one or two hours, you can be up in the hills as well. And there's great diversity there in terms of ways to stretch your legs. It's also got two pretty big gardens, which comes in handy for parties.

**What's your favorite room?**

I like my office. It's got all my bits and pieces for work. And it's well relatively isolated from the rest of the building. So there are fewer distractions.

**Diversity (noun)**  - the fact of many different types of things or people being included in something; a range of different things or people.

**Stretch your legs (idiom)**  - to go for a walk, especially after sitting in the same position for a long time.

**Come in handy (idiom)**  - to be useful.

**Isolated (adj.)**  - not near to other places.

**Panorama (noun)**  - a view of a wide area.

**Decking (noun)**  - a floor outside made of wood, or the long pieces of wood used to make this floor.

**Contingent on/upon sth**  - depending on something else in the future in order to happen.

**In/for the foreseeable future**  - as far into the future as you can imagine or plan for.

**To renovate (verb)**  - to repair and improve something, especially a building.

**Apps**

**Rory, tell us, what apps do you use?**

Well, until recently, it was just the banking ones. But now there's, well, it's almost always the messenger or messaging ones, because I have to stay in touch with my friends and colleagues while I work from home. Plus, a lot of my friends are in different countries, and actually a lot of the people that I teach as well, to be honest with you. So it's useful this way.

**Which apps are popular in your country?**

Oh, honestly, you'd have to ask an expert. I have no idea. But if I were to guess I would say any of the social media ones like Instagram or Tiktok. You always hear about them in the news.

**Do you want to make an app of your own in the future?**

Well, I think it would be fun to learn, but I'm a little overburdened just now with all the other things I have to do like work in university. So I think it'll have to take a back seat. Plus, I don't have a clue what I would make an app for.

**What kinds of apps will you use in the future?**

Well, I'm not a fortune teller, though, I'd imagine I'll keep on using messenger apps, though they might change, will always need to communicate. I doubt I'll use any of the gaming ones since I don't think they're a productive use of my time. If I became a fully qualified teacher in Scotland, though, I definitely need this more specialized app that helps teachers make their plans. It's really useful. And it also doesn't give you any of those pesky notifications. So that's quite good too.

**How much time do you usually spend on these apps?**

**Messenger (noun)**  - app used for messaging.

**Social media (U or plural noun)**  - websites and computer programs that allow people to communicate and share information on the internet using a computer or mobile phone.

**Overburdened (adj.)**  - having too much to carry, contain, or deal with.

**Take a back seat (phrase)**  - to choose not to be in a position of responsibility in an organization or activity.

**Fortune teller (noun)**  - a person who tells you what they think will happen to you in the future.

**Pesky (adj.)**  - annoying or causing trouble.

**Notification (noun)**  - a message that is automatically sent to you on your mobile phone or computer.

**Offices**

**Rory, let's talk about offices. Do you work in an office?**

I do, actually. I'm privileged enough to have a home office that I can do all my university work and teaching and podcasting from.

**Is it common for people in your country to work in an office?**

Well, probably not as common as it used to be since we've had the pandemic and people have been working from home a lot more. Still you do see people heading off there from time to time, probably to justify the expense, to be honest.

**Where do most of your friends work?**

Well, I think the majority have pretty hands-on jobs. So they work in nursing, teaching, or the care industry more generally. Some of them still work in offices, but that's a rarity these days.

**Would you like to design an office?**

I could probably do the basics, like what I would want, but the more technical aspects would be lost on me. I like the idea of an office with a desk that I could stand at rather than the current setup, which would probably be better for my back, now I think about it. Aside from that, I like the idea of having greenery and lots of sunlight. But that's about the extent of it.

**Privileged (adj.)**  - having or showing a special advantage.

**Hands** - on (adj.)

**Greenery (noun)**  - green plants or branches, especially when cut and used as decoration.

**Flaw (noun)**  - a fault, mistake, or weakness, especially one that happens while something is being planned or made, or that causes something not to be perfect.

**To confine (verb)**  - to limit an activity, person, or problem in some way.

**Interference (noun)**  - an occasion when someone tries to interfere in a situation.

**Sports**

**Rory, are you ready?**

Yes.

**Let's talk about sports. Do you like sports?**

Probably not as much as some people but I keep abreast of the biggest matches when I can. I think I prefer doing sports, and, well, doing exercise more than actually watching either of them happen.

**Do you like watching sports programs on TV?**

Well, like I said, it's not really my thing, unless it's something major, like, I don't know, my own country or city playing against another team. And even then I only really have a look in the passing. I don't have a great deal of time for it these days.

**Do you like to watch live games?**

Oh, I think the last time I did that was when I was a child. Getting tickets to these events and then actually getting to them can be a bit expensive and demanding. Especially now there's always, well, there are crowds anyway, but it's quite crowded. And then just the general atmosphere is not something I want to be part of at the moment.

**Major (adj.)**  - more important, bigger, or more serious than others of the same type.

**In passing**  - while talking or thinking about something else.

**Aftermath (noun)**  - the period that follows an unpleasant event or accident, and the effects that it causes.

**E** - sport (noun)

**Debatable (adj.)**  - not clear or certain because different people may have different opinions.

**Competitive (adj.)**  - involving competition.

**Competition (noun)**  - a situation in which someone is trying to win something or be more successful than someone else.

**Time Management**

**To backfire (verb)**  - (of a plan) to have the opposite result from the one you intended.

**To cope (verb)**  - to deal successfully with a difficult situation.

**Agenda (noun)**  - a list of aims or possible future achievements.

**Demanding (adj.)**  - needing a lot of time, attention, or energy

**Downtime (noun)**  - time when you relax and do not do very much.

**To recuperate (verb)**  - to become well again after an illness; to get back your strength, health, etc.

**Noise**

**Do you mind different noises Rory?**

Not if they are overly intrusive, no. Of course, something like a loud bang will give anyone quite a fright or jolt them out of whatever they're doing. But generally, I'm quite good at filtering out distractions.

**What types of noise do you come across in your daily life?**

Well, I teach kids so screaming and loud chattering are quite common from day to day. And during the commute there are the normal traffic signs. I suppose lastly at the gym, there's the usual clattering, crashing and grunting as people go about their routines as well.

**Intrusive (adj.)**  - affecting someone in a way that annoys them and makes them feel uncomfortable.

**Jolt (verb)**  - to (cause something or someone to) move suddenly and violently.

**Commute (verb)**  - to make the same journey regularly between work and home.

**Clatter (verb)**  - to make continuous loud noises by hitting hard objects against each other, or to cause objects to do this.

**Grunt (verb)**  - (of a person) to make a short, low sound instead of speaking, usually because of anger or pain.

**Despise (verb)**  - to feel a strong dislike for someone or something because you think that that person or thing is bad or has no value.

**Go off (phrasal verb)**  - if a device goes off, it starts to ring loudly or make a loud noise.

**Going out**

**Rory, do you like going out or staying at home?**

To tell the truth I much more of a homebody, to be honest. I rarely like going out to clubs these days because I'm a little bit past it, and I hate loud music and crowds. It's the kind of combination that sort of makes your insides vibrate at the same time they're being crushed out of existence.

**Homebody (noun)**  - a person who likes spending time at home rather than going out with friends or travelling to different places.

**Be in a time warp**  - to be in a place where the rules of time don't apply.

**Hence (adverb)**  - that is the reason or explanation for.

**Scarcely (adverb)**  - almost not.

**Nip (verb)**  - to go somewhere quickly or be somewhere for only a short time.

**Din (noun)**  - a loud, unpleasant confused noise that lasts for a long time..

**Venue (noun)**  - the place where a public event or meeting happens.

**Recreational (adj.)**  - connected with ways of enjoying yourself when you are not working.

**Resemble (verb)**  - to look like or be like someone or something.

**Wander (verb)**  - to walk around slowly in a relaxed way or without any clear purpose or direction.

**Relatives**

**Do you have many relatives?**

I suppose, if we take into consideration all the numerous distant relatives and many cousins once or twice removed, then yeah. It seems like there are almost hundreds of us.

**How often do you meet your relatives?**

Probably not often enough these days. The last family gathering was at Christmas and that was online. And it was exhausting since we were spread out all over the place in different time zones. It was really hard for me to organize, actually.

**Once, twice, etc. removed**  - used to refer to a cousin (= a relation) separated from you by one, two, etc. generations (= same family age groups).

**Spread out (phrasal verb)**  - if people spread out, they move from being close together in a group to being in different places across a larger area.

**Many moons ago**  - a long time ago.

**Gathering (noun)**  - a party or a meeting when many people come together as a group.

**Catch up (phrasal verb)**  - to learn or discuss the latest news.

**Gossip (noun)**  - conversation or reports about other people's private lives that might be unkind, disapproving, or not true.

**Distinguish (verb)**  - to notice or understand the difference between two things, or to make one person or thing seem different from another.

**Hierarchy (noun)**  - a system in which people or things are arranged according to their importance.

**Intertwined (adj.)**  - twisted together or closely connected so as to be difficult to separate.

**Overexpose (verb)**  - to make someone or something experience something too much, or for too long, risking harm.

**Eccentricity (noun)**  - the state of being eccentric.

**Eccentric (adj.)**  - strange or unusual, sometimes in a humorous way.

**Pets**

**Rory, have you ever had a pet?**

Yeah, our family had a tradition of keeping Chao-chaos. That's a breed of dog from China. It's one of the seven ancient breeds, actually, I think. And we also had fish, stick insects and an assortment of other small creatures from the local area that my little brother and I picked up. We don't have them now, but we did before when we were younger.

**Do you have a pet at home now?**

No, I live in a rented and shared apartment, so that wouldn't be fair. And I haven't the time to look after another animal, to be honest with you. I would like a dog, though, when I have a family of my own. I think it's helpful for kids to have a pet to help them learn about the world and cope with the struggles it brings.

**What kind of pets do you like?**

Well, I like dogs. If anyone has a dog, they have immediately won me over. Specifically big dogs. Though I like dogs in general too. They're really welcoming and they create this air of warmth in a household, which is really nice to have.

**Did you have any pets when you were a child?**

Well, like I said, we had two of man's best friend, and numerous goldfish, and small creatures. I think it helped a lot growing up to have companions. Though I should have appreciated it more at the time. I don't think you ever do when you were a child.

**What kinds of pets are common in your country?**

Ok. Well, at the risk of flogging a dead horse in terms of topics, dogs are very popular. You can see them everywhere. And cats are also a common sight in our neighborhoods and the surrounding neighborhoods as well. As our fish, although the fish will be outside in their fish tanks. And I heard that people are increasingly keeping ducks, but I'm not sure if that's true or not. Scotland freedom. Do what you like. Keep your duck.

**No comments from me. Why do some people keep pets at home?**

**Breed (noun)**  - a particular type of animal or plant.

**Assortment (noun)**  - a group of different types of something.

**Create an air of sth**  - create an atmosphere of sth.

**Household (noun)**  - home.

**Numerous (adj.)**  - many.

**Flog a dead horse (idiom)**  - to waste effort on something when there is no chance of succeeding.

**Ambience (noun)**  - the character of a place or the quality it seems to have.

**Companionship (noun)**  - the enjoyment of spending time with other people.

**Cater to sth (phrasal verb)**  - to provide what someone or something wants or needs.

**Rest**

**Rory, how often do you take a rest?**

God, probably not often enough. Although I'm getting better at decompressing and taking time off. Oh, and highlighting that to people and encouraging them to do the same. For example, in terms of exercise, I used to think it was important to work out every day and then I realized it's actually important to have some rest days to promote muscle growth and recovery. So now I have weekends off.

**What do you do when you take a rest?**

Bit of a nerd, actually. I watch videos on YouTube or I read comics and chat to my friends. I'm lucky that I have people like them actually who are pretty chilled out and they agree that relaxing is quite an important thing to do. A lot of people are like, you need to work all the time and you must be busy and doing things. But I'm lucky my friends understand the value of some me time.

**Do you take a nap when you have a rest?**

No, although I can see why siestas and catnaps are popular, but I always feel really unwell when I do that, so I try and avoid it. One solid block of sleep is enough for me. Although and I do get it, it's like seven to eight hours. That's fine.

**How do you feel after taking a nap?**

Like I said, I'm not a huge fan of them. When I have taken them, I felt groggy and not very energized, which is the point of it, although I suppose the counter argument is that maybe I'm not napping for long enough. And that's the actual problem, although I don't know how on earth you would prove that.

**When was the last time you took a rest and what did you do?**

Well, I just had a huge month off there, where I didn't do much extra work and I reconnected with the people in my life. And that was a lot of fun to do that reconnecting, and writing, and playing video games, and sometimes just looking at the window and watching the world go by. People watching. It's great fun.

**When will you take a rest next time?**

**Decompress (verb)**  - to relax.

**Time off (noun)**  - a period of time when you do not work because of illness or holidays.

**Peruse (verb)**  - to read through something, especially in order to find the part you are interested in.

**Me time (noun)**  - time when you can do what you want to do.

**Siesta (noun)**  - a rest or sleep taken after lunch, especially in hot countries.

**Catnap (noun)**  - a short sleepy.

**Groggy (adj.)**  - weak and unable to think clearly or walk correctly, usually because of tiredness or illness.

**Reconnect (verb)**  - to join or be joined with something else again after becoming separated.

**Stroll (verb)**  - to walk in a slow relaxed way, especially for pleasure.

**Future**

**Rory, tell the world, how do you think your life will change in the future?**

Well-well, ideally it will change for the better. I'll have less work, fewer jobs and more free time to spend with my friends and family. And hopefully I'll have a family of my own in a house that I own as well. So in summary, less work and more people will be in my life.

**What are your future plans?**

Well, in a nutshell, get into primary teaching and have a quiet life with a partner and two and a half children and a dog. But to expand on that, I need to do a university course and hopefully that will be next year. And then after that, I'll see how that works out. And it all depends on whether I like primary school teaching or not. And if I like it, then I'll stay in Scotland. And if I don't like it, then I'll need to go back to English teaching. But that's OK because I like English teaching as well. Either way, hopefully I'll have the time to buy a house and live there and do whatever work I set alone there.

**Are you worried about your future?**

A little bit. One of my fears is that I might not get to meet my children or grandchildren, having passed the point of no return for that to happen. And I think I still have a bit of time before I hit panic stations, though. So it's just a small worry, but it's not... But it's still something to be concerned about.

**In a nutshell**  - using as few words as possible.

**Point of no return**  - the stage at which it is no longer possible to stop what you are doing and when its effects cannot now be avoided or prevented.

**Panic station**  - a situation in which people feel worried and nervous because things need to be done quickly.

**Miserable (adj.)**  - very unhappy.

**Hurdle (noun)**  - a difficulty to be dealt with.

**A great/good deal**  - a large amount.

**Desirable (adj.)**  - worth having and wanted by most people.

**Leapfrog (verb)**  - to improve your position by going past other people quickly or by missing out some stages.

**Math**

**Rory, do like math?**

No, and I probably never will. I think numbers are just too abstract for me and I don't really understand them. I understand that they're important. I get that. But they will never be my thing. It's something that I share with my mom, not really having a head for numbers.

**Is math difficult to learn?**

Extremely. I can't describe how it feels to any great degree of accuracy, but I can just feel my eyes glazing over and my soul begs for all to end whenever I encounter math or any mathematical equation. I think it's just the effort of creating the abstractions in my head. I can do this with words, like I'm good with language, but I can't do it with numbers. That area of my brain seems to have completely atrophied by now.

**Do you think math is hard?**

Well, for me personally, yes, but I didn't have terribly good math teachers when I was younger. That wasn't their fault entirely because I wasn't a good student either. And the whole situation of math education just wasn't well suited to me learning it, to be honest with you. More generally, though, at least at the basic levels of arithmetic, it shouldn't be so torturous for people, especially young people in smaller classes like you can do some sums in your head, for example.

**When did you start learning math?**

Oh, primary one, I think. That's our equivalent to the first grade. We had to learn times tables by heart and do long division. Not in primary one. I think that times tables came a little bit later, but we started doing like basic addition and subtraction in primary one. But it was all learning by rote and it was all very dull and it was useful for basic arithmetic with money and things. But beyond that, it wasn't terribly... We didn't have much utility.

**Who taught you math?**

Oh, my teachers mainly. My mum and dad tried to help, but I think they were as frustrated as I was by the end of it, to be honest. The information just wasn't digestible, no matter which route we took. So I think this was why rote learning was basically the only the only route that we could take.

**Did you usually use a calculator?**

**To have a head for sth (idiom)**  - to have the mental ability to do something well.

**Glaze over**  - if your eyes glaze or glaze over, they stay still and stop showing any emotion because you are bored or tired or have stopped listening.

**Atrophy (verb)**  - (of a part of the body) to be reduced in size and therefore strength, or, more generally, to become weaker.

**Arithmetic (noun)**  - calculations involving adding and multiplying, etc. numbers.

**Torturous (adj.)**  - involving a lot of suffering or difficulty.

**Sum (noun)**  - a calculation, especially a simple one, using such processes as adding, taking away, multiplying, or dividing.

**Times table (noun)**  - multiplication table.

**Rote learning**  - learning something in order to be able to repeat it from memory, rather than in order to understand it.

**Vice versa (adverb)**  - used to say that what you have just said is also true in the opposite order.

**Precise (adj.)**  - exact and accurate.

**Memory**

**Do you have a good memory?**

I have a better one than I did since I started organizing everything in my head. So I organize my head and my life, and my days more effectively now. I have a routine and planner, and I take notes a lot, and that helps greatly.

**Do you have a good memory for faces?**

I have a memory for faces, but I don't have a memory for names or numbers. I wish I could remember names better, but for me, it's always a challenge. I suppose it's because I meet new people so often that it's hard to recall some names. Especially if it's a lot of people at once like new classes, for example. And the other thing I don't have a memory for is numbers. I don't even know my own phone number. I can't even remember that and there's no way except repeating it, like I don't know what's it called. Road to learning, maybe that would help me remember it.

**Do you do anything to improve your memory?**

Well, like I said, I take notes when people tell me things, that helps a lot in terms of sort of abstract concepts locations, and things like that. Sorry, more concrete things like locations. And, then I make sure the notes are displayed for I can see them. So I'll write something on a post-it note and then I can stick that on the appropriate page in my diary and then I can see it there, because it's a bright color that highlights what I need to do. That usually means that the notes section of my planner is like overflowing, but at least I know what I need to remember.

**Planner (noun)**  - a document or software program that helps you plan something.

**Recall (verb)**  - to bring the memory of a past event into your mind, and often to give a description of what you remember.

**Abstract (adj.)**  - existing as an idea, feeling, or quality, not as a material object.

**Concrete (adj.)**  - clear and certain, or real and existing in a form that can be seen or felt.

**Post** - it note (noun)

**Overflow (verb)**  - when a place overflows, or people or things overflow from somewhere, some people or things have to come out because it cannot contain them all.

**Sieve (noun)**  - a tool consisting of a wood, plastic, or metal frame with a wire or plastic net attached to it. You use it either to separate solids from a liquid, or you rub larger solids through it to make them smaller.

**Consequence (noun)**  - a result of a particular action or situation, often one that is bad or not convenient.

**Algorithm (noun)**  - a set of mathematical instructions or rules that, especially if given to a computer, will help to calculate an answer to a problem.

**Museums**

**Do you like to visit museums?**

Um, actually not overly so. I just suppose it might be a fun idea for a date, but I wouldn't go there as part of a hobby or something like that. I think they're a bit boring and dull, to be honest with you. It's not exactly something that I would enjoy doing just by myself.

**How often do you go to museums?**

Like I said, um, not really very often. I'm not the biggest history buff these days, although I used to be. So I think I went to the last museum was probably in Volgograd or something like that. But I usually prefer books these days. Like I said, I'm not a big fan of museums at all, to be honest with you.

**Are there any museums in your hometown?**

Actually, yes, there's loads. There's this old jute mill called the Verdant Works, which showcases how, well, fabric was produced back in the Victorian era. And then on the subject of the Victorian era, there's the, I think it's the RMS Discovery, which is an Antarctic exploration ship, which was captained by, well, Captain Scott. It was recovered from Antarctica after they got stranded there. So it's a museum now and there's loads more besides that. But that's not such a surprise because it's the fourth largest city, so a concentration of museums is to be expected.

**When is the last time you visited a museum?**

Well, I said it was Volgograd there, but actually, I just realised that after that, I went to the state historical museum with my friend Lena in... Well, the state historical museum is in Russia. And I think it was about two years ago now, actually. It was, it was a very poignant experience. On the inside there are loads and loads of pictures and portraits of monarchs long since passed. For example the members of the royal family and the, well, the aristocracy in general, really. And the ones that were of the last royal family in Russia were quite, they had quite an emotional impact because, of course, you understand what happened to them. But on the flip side, it was also kind of entertaining because there were translations from Russian to English on the plaques next to them. And that was quite funny because of all the mistranslations that had happened. And to be honest with you, it was really, they were really silly mistranslations. Like if I had been asked to do the translations, I wouldn't have made those mistakes.

**Did you visit museums when you were a child?**

We used to go to the Natural History Museum quite often. And in Scotland, when you're younger, I think it's the same everywhere, to be honest. You have school trips to different museums. So I talked about the verdant works before when I was talking about the museums in our hometown. There was lots of excursions there, I suppose so, yeah. It was definitely a much more common experience when I was younger. Now it's not so much because I have less time and different things to do at that time.

**Do you think museums are important?**

**Buff (noun)**  - a person who knows a lot about and is very interested in a particular subject.

**Jute (noun)**  - substance that comes from a Southeast Asian plant, used for making rope and cloth.

**Mill (noun)**  - a factory where a particular substance is produced.

**Showcase (verb)**  - to show the best qualities or parts of something.

**Poignant (adj.)**  - causing or having a very sharp feeling of sadness.

**Plaque (noun)**  - a flat piece of metal, stone, wood, or plastic with writing on it that is attached to a wall, door, or other object.

**Verdant (adj.)**  - covered with healthy green plants or grass.

**Excursion (noun)**  - a short journey usually made for pleasure, often by a group of people.

**Storehouse (noun)**  - a large building for storing things, often before they are sold, used, or sent out to shops.

**Treasure (noun)**  - anything of great value.

**Treasure trove**  - a place that is full of something good.

**TV Program**

**Rory, what kind of TV programs do you like?**

Ones I can stream on demand. And, you know, the kind that you can have on in the background as sort of, well, background noise for lack of a better term.

**What's your favorite TV program?**

Well, I used to like science fiction programs. I don't have much time to watch TV right now, but science fiction definitely. And science fiction series in particular. I really like Star Trek. And if I had the time, I'd rewatch all of Star Trek. Star Trek Voyager in particular is my favorite.

**Do you often watch programs on TV or on your cell phone?**

Well, actually, I watch them on my smartphone. I really want a widescreen TV, though, for my new apartment. But there's just not enough time to go and buy the thing and then pay to have it installed and put up on the wall on the support struts, I guess.

**Do you like watching the same kind of program all the time?**

Oh, definitely, yeah. I often play things to death, especially if they're funny things. Like it's not just TV programs, it's things like Vines, for example, or comedy specials. I really like watching the same things again and again till I'm like word-perfect and how the script goes.

**Do you talk with your friends about the program you watched?**

Um, not really, actually. I was thinking about this the other day. We have different tastes in just about everything in terms of the media that we consume. So if they asked me, I would tell them. But I don't just go to them and just come out with it completely from nothing.

**On demand**  - at any time that someone wants or needs something.

**Widescreen (adj.)**  - having a wider than usual screen that shows very clear pictures.

**Strut (noun)**  - holds TV on the wall.

**Install (verb)**  - to put something in place so that it is ready for use.

**To death (idiom)**  - a lot.

**In terms of**  - used to describe which particular area of a subject you are discussing.

**Getting up early**

**Do you often get up early in the morning?**

Yeah. Um, 05:30 is my regular wake up time during the week and even on days, it's not required. I still wake up at seven or eight o'clock in the morning, just as day breaks. It means I have enough time to do everything I have planned.

**What do you usually do when you get up early?**

Well, I think we discussed this before and not much has changed since then. It's a pretty fixed routine. I work out for about 45 minutes, breakfast, which is always tuna and protein shake and sirniki. And I'll go for a shower, get dressed and then head out to get the metro. And then after that, it's the bus to school. I think that's good, though. I get more done that way.

**Is breakfast important to you?**

Um, it didn't used to be, but it is now. If I didn't have breakfast I wouldn't have the fuel I need to get through the day and get everything doto provide what someone or something wants or needs.to provide what someone or something wants or needs.ne that I wanted to get done. That's why it's pretty static. Though I still enjoy it despite that.

**Do you get up early on the weekends?**

I try to sleep in usually, but sometimes I have to be up at the crack to do things for work. I don't mind it, though, since it's usually pretty easy stuff. It still needs to be done, though.

**What kinds of people usually get up early?**

Oh, highly industrious people or people with busy schedules. And you have to get a lot done by day's end. Those would be the main groups, but there are shift workers and people who work across multiple time zones who might have to get up to cater to their schedules and the needs of their clients, respectively. Some people do it out of a personal belief it's just better for you. There's this book called "The Five am Club" that describes this process of early rising and how it benefits. Well the benefits thereof, I suppose.

**The break of day**  - literary the time early in the morning when it starts getting light.

**Static (adj.)**  - staying in one place without moving, or not changing for a long time.

**Sleep in (phrasal verb)**  - to sleep until later in the morning than you usually do.

**At the crack**  - very early in the morning, especially at the time when the sun first appears.

**Industrious (adj.)**  - an industrious person works hard.

**Schedule (noun)**  - a list of planned activities or things to be done showing the times or dates when they are intended to happen or be done.

**Shiftwork (noun)**  - a system in which different groups of workers work somewhere at different times of the day and night.

**Cater to (verb)**  - to provide what someone or something wants or needs.

**Distraction (noun)**  - something that prevents someone from giving their attention to something else.

**Disruption (noun)**  - the action of preventing something, especially a system, process, or event, from continuing as usual or as expected.

**Happiness**

**Absence (noun)**  - the non

**Ill feeling (noun)**  - angry feelings between people

**Abundance (noun)**  - a very large quantity of something

**Exhilaration (noun)**  - a feeling of excitement, happiness, or elation.

**Gut feeling (noun)**  - a feeling that you are certain is right, although you can give no good reason why.

**Awry (adj.)**  - away from the usual or expected course; amiss.

**To conflate (verb)**  - combine (two or more sets of information, texts, ideas, etc.) into one.

**Impetus (noun)**  - a force that helps something to happen or develop more quickly

**Glimmer (noun)**  - a soft weak light that is not steady

**To air on the side of caution (idiom)**  - to be especially careful rather than taking a risk or making a mistake.

**To scaffold (verb)**  - to support something with a framework.

**Feisty (adj.)**  - (of a person, typically one who is relatively small) lively, determined, and courageous.

**Limelight (noun)**  - the focus of public attention.

**To crave (verb)**  - to feel a powerful desire for (something).

**To get back in the saddle (idiom)**  - to return to something after an absence; to make another attempt after suffering a failure; to return to something that is familiar.

**To pinpoint (verb)**  - find or identify with great accuracy or precision.

**To tackle (verb)**  - make determined efforts to deal with (a problem or difficult task).

**Under the radar (idiom)**  - not getting attention : unnoticed.

**Forests and Trees**

**Surroundings (noun)**  - the place where someone lives and the conditions they live in.

**Commission (noun)**  - a group of people who have been formally chosen to discover information about a problem or examine the reasons why the problem exists.

**Heritage (noun)**  - features belonging to the culture of a particular society, such as traditions, languages, or buildings, that were created in the past and still have historical importance.

**To a certain extent (idiom)**  - somewhat; partly; in a limited way or to a limited degree.

**Shelter (verb)**  - to protect yourself, or another person or thing, from bad weather, danger, or attack.

**To take the pressure off (idiom)**  - take to reduce the amount of stress felt by.

**Abundance (noun)**  - an amount that is more than enough.

**Guard (verb)**  - to protect something.

**Grief (noun)**  - very great sadness.

**Over** - harvesting

**Traffic**

**Tram (noun)**  - an electric vehicle that transports people, usually in cities, and goes along metal tracks in the road.

**Trolleybus (noun)**  - a public transport vehicle with rubber tires that travels along ordinary roads in towns and is driven by electricity supplied from a wire above the road.

**Rush hour (noun)**  - the busy part of the day when towns and cities are crowded, either in the morning when people are travelling to work, or in the evening when people are travelling home.

**Mercifully (adverb)**  - luckily.

**Propensity (noun)**  - a tendency to behave in a particular way.

**Regardless (adverb)**  - despite; not being affected by something.

**Proportionate (adj.)**  - same as proportional.

**Initially (adverb)**  - at the beginning.

**Trend (noun)**  - a general development or change in a situation or in the way that people are behaving.

**Major (adj.)**  - more important, bigger, or more serious than others of the same type.

**Side effect (noun)**  - an unexpected result of a situation.

**Songs**

**Pumped (adj.)**  - excited about something.

**Vocal range (noun)** - the range of pitches that can be made by a human voice.

**Flights of fantasy (idiom)**  - an imaginative but unrealistic idea.

**Key element**  - most important point or piece of something. Examples The key element in a White Russian is vodka.

**To hum (verb)**  - to sing without opening your mouth.

**Weather**

**Dreary (adj.)**  - boring and making you feel unhappy.

**Progressive (adj.)**  - developing or happening gradually

**Damp (adj.)**  - slightly wet, usually in an unpleasant way

**Torrential rain (phrase)**  - very heavy rain.

**Scorching (adj.)**  - very hot.

**Oxymoron (noun)**  - two words used together, which mean two different or opposite things, such as 'bitter

**Cloudburst (noun)**  - a sudden heavy fall of rain.

**Humidity (noun)**  - a measurement of how much water there is in the air:

**Lethargic (adj.)**  - having little energy; feeling unwilling and unable to do anything.

**To soak up (phrasal verb)**  - to enjoy the effects or experience of something as much as possible.

**Heatwave (noun)**  - a period of time such as a few weeks when the weather is much hotter than usual.

**To vegetate (verb)**  - to live in a way that has no physical and mental activity.

**Walking**

**Urgent (adj.)**  - requiring immediate action or attention.

**To run late (phrase)**  - to arrive and/or leave later than the time that is expected.

**Pace (noun)**  - speed in walking, running, or moving.

**Cornered (adj.)**  - forced into an awkward, embarrassing, or inescapable position.

**To go by sth (phrasal verb)**  - to follow something or be shown the way by something.

**Burst (noun)**  - a sudden brief outbreak.

**Scenery**

**Be littered with sth (phrase)**  - to contain a lot of something.

**Pervade (verb)**  - to spread through all parts of something.

**Behold (verb)**  - to see or look at someone or something.

**Memento (noun)**  - an object that you keep to remember a person, place, or event.

**Motto (noun)**  - a short sentence or phrase that expresses a belief or purpose.

**Urge (noun)**  - a strong wish, especially one that is difficult or impossible to control.

**Public Holidays**

**To compensate (verb)**  - reduce or counteract (something unwelcome or unpleasant) by exerting an opposite force or effect.

**Urge (noun)**  - a strong desire or impulse.

**Leathered (adj.)**  - extremely drunk.

**To decompress (verb)**  - calm down and relax.

**To recharge (verb)**  - to regain one's strength and energy by resting for a time.

**Dancing**

**Coordination (noun)**  - the ability to use different parts of the body together smoothly and efficiently.

**Clumsy (adj.)**  - awkward in movement or in handling things.

**To have two left feet (idiom)**  - being clumsy or awkward.

**Awkward (adj.)**  - causing or feeling uneasy embarrassment or inconvenience.

**Rhythm (noun)**  - a strong, regular repeated pattern of movement or sound.

**Mode (noun)**  - way or manner in which something occurs or is experienced, expressed, or done.

**Enticing (adj.)**  - attractive or tempting.

**Contryside**

**To burn out (phrasal verb)**  - ruin one's health or become completely exhausted through overwork.

**Quasi** - (prefix)

**Ditch (noun)**  - a narrow channel dug at the side of a road or field, to hold or carry away water.

**Moat (noun)**  - a deep, wide ditch surrounding a castle, fort, or town, typically filled with water and intended as a defense against attack.

**To stroll (verb)**  - to walk in a leisurely way.

**Bonfire (noun)**  - a large open

**Liberating (adj.)**  - providing a release from a situation which limits freedom of thought or behaviour.

**To spring up (phrasal verb)**  - to grow or appear suddenly

**Foreboding (noun)**  - a strong feeling that something terrible is going to happen.

**Cakes**

**Sugar cravings (noun)**  - an intense, urgent, or abnormal desire or longing for sweet things.

**Sweet tooth (noun)**  - a great liking for sweet

**Texture (noun)**  - those properties of a food that are sensed by touch in the mouth and with the hands.

**Unadulterated (noun)**  - (especially of food or drink) having no inferior added substances; pure.

**Guilty pleasure (noun)**  - something pleasurable that induces a usually minor feeling of guilt.

**To confect (verb)**  - make (something elaborate or dainty) from various elements.

**Mass** - produced (adj.)

**Street Markets 2**

**So, Rory, do you like going to street markets?**

God... We seem to be going through a period of topics that don't really affect me. I haven't been to a street market in years. They don't tend to have things that I'm really interested in. Usually I buy various bits and pieces online unless it's a book or a trinket for people back home. But like I say, that hasn't been for a while.

**When was the last time you went to a street market?**

I honestly can't recall. But if I were to guess, randomly, I think it was when I went to Haiti. And there was a collection of stalls and tables by the seaside. And they sold gifts based on seashells and things like that. You had to haggle over the prices, which I wasn't good at. But it was why I remembered it because I remember the merchants being really annoyed with me.

**Are there any street markets in your country?**

Well, probably not as many as there used to be after the pandemic, but you do see them from time to time, especially farmers' markets in the villages or small towns.

**What do people usually buy there?**

Well, I'm hardly an expert, but I think a lot of them sell local foodstuffs and handicrafts. Of course, you can have small stalls and tables with just about anything, but it seems like those would be the main good sold.

**Do many people go to street markets in your country?**

I honestly wouldn't know, but if I were to guess then I would say they would if they were given an easy opportunity to. People love a good bargain, and oh, well, or unique gift. And it's possible to get those at street markets.

**Do you prefer shopping in a mall or a street market?**

**Bit (noun)**  - a small piece or amount of something.

**Trinket (noun)**  - a small decorative object, or a piece of jewellery that is cheap or of low quality.

**Stall (noun)**  - a large table or a small shop with an open front from which goods are sold in a public place.

**Foodstuff (noun)**  - any substance that is used as food or to make food.

**Handicraft (noun)**  - a product that is made by hand rather than by using a machine.

**Bargain (noun)**  - an agreement between two people or groups in which each promises to do something in exchange for something else.

**To traipse (verb)**  - to walk from one place to another, often feeling tired or bored.

**Losing and finding things**

**To be prone to sth/do sth**  - likely to show a particular characteristic, usually a negative one, or to be affected by something bad, such as damage or an illness.

**To misplace (verb)**  - to lose something temporarily by forgetting where you have put it.

**Reminder (noun)**  - a written or spoken message that reminds someone to do something.

**To retrace (verb)**  - to go back over something, for example a path or a series of past actions.

**In your mind's eye**  - in your imagination or memory.

**Lose track (of sth)**  - to stop keeping a record of something, or stop being certain that you know or remember what has happened.

**Notice (noun)**  - (a board, piece of paper, etc. containing) information or instructions.

**Moderately (adverb)**  - in a way that is neither small nor large in size, amount, degree, or strength.

**Strangers**

**To rub along (phrasal verbs)**  - If two people rub along, they work or live together in a satisfactory way.

**To get on with smn (phrasal verb)**  - if you get on with someone, you like them and have a friendly relationship with them.

**Prematurely (adv.)**  - in a way that happens or is done too soon, especially before the natural or suitable time.

**To bump into smn (phrasal verb)**  - to meet someone you know when you have not planned to meet them.

**Damp (adj.)**  - slightly wet, especially in a way that is not pleasant or comfortable.

**To fall out with smn (phrasal verb)**  - to argue with someone and stop being friendly with them: He left home after falling out with his parents.

**Pressing (adj.)**  - A pressing problem, need, or issue has to be dealt with immediately.

**Social cohesion (noun)**  - refers to the strength of relationships and the sense of solidarity among members of a community.

**Family**

**Immediate family (noun)**  - a person's immediate family is his or her smallest family unit, including parents, siblings, spouse, and children.

**Extended family (noun)**  - a family which extends beyond the nuclear family to include grandparents and other relatives.

**A fount of knowledge (noun)**  - a term used to describe something, but usually someone, who contains all the answers, something or someone that has a large aggregate of information.

**To look up to (phrasal verb)**  - to have a great deal of respect for someone.

**To dismiss (verb)**  - treat as unworthy of serious consideration.

**Hospitable (adj.)**  - friendly and welcoming to visitors or guests.

**Traveling**

**To have a blast (idiom)**  - to have a good time, to really enjoy oneself.

**Long haul (noun)**  - a long distance (in reference to the transport of goods or passengers).

**Landlocked (adj.)**  - (of a country or region) almost or entirely surrounded by land.

**Autonomy (noun)**  - freedom from external control or influence; independence.

**To prize smth (noun)**  - to think that someone or something is very valuable or important.

**Companion (verb)**  - a person you spend a lot of time with often because you are friends or because you are travelling together.

**Street Food**

**Rory, let's talk about street food. Yum, yum, yum. Shall we?**

Let's.

**Do you like street food?**

Not really, I'm afraid. The last time I had some I felt like I might die from dysentery. My stomach complaint was so bad. It's not my thing at all these days.

**What kinds of street food do you like?**

Well, none now. I used to like the odd thing here and there. But I never really got into it. Well, at least not enough to build up a taste for it or a regular set of things that I'd buy.

**How often do you eat street food?**

Well, like I said, almost never. I don't think it's good for me. I think I'm not used to the bacteria or whatever it is in it. Even if it was a one-off bad experience, I still wouldn't like to repeat it if I possibly can.

**When was the last time you had street food?**

I think the last time was almost 11 years ago in New York. I bought a hot dog from a street vendor and I was really unwell. I'm not sure the fine details are fit for public consumption. So let's just say it wasn't the best of times, I really didn't feel well at all.

**What street food do people usually eat?**

**Dysentery (noun)**  - a disease of the bowels that causes the contents to be passed out of the body much more often and in a more liquid form than usual. It is caused by an infection that is spread by dirty water or food.

**Complaint (noun)**  - a statement that something is wrong or not satisfactory.

**One** - off (adj.)

**Vendor (noun)**  - someone who is selling something.

**Consumption (noun)**  - the act of using, eating, or drinking something.

**To sauté (verb)**  - to cook food in oil or fat over heat, usually until it is brown.

**Principle (noun)**  - a basic idea or rule that explains or controls how something happens or works.

**To be a recipe for disaster, trouble, success, etc. (phrase)**  - to be very likely to become a disaster, success, etc.

**Mobile Phones 2**

**What was your first mobile phone?**

I think it was this brick-like Nokia. I mean, we are talking about 20 years ago. So I can't remember the exact model. But the make was definitely a Nokia.

**How often do you use your mobile phone?**

Well, I think it's on an everyday basis now, since it's a smartphone, so it's like synced to my email, calendar, everything I need to work. Oh, I even use it to record the podcast or sorry, I even used it to record the podcast.

**Do you use it for texting or calls?**

I honestly can't remember the last time I sent a real text or made an actual call. But I use those functions on various messenger services and social media sites that I'm signed up to pretty much all the time.

**Can you describe your mobile phone?**

I suppose it looks like a black mirror to borrow an expression. It's just a handheld screen most of the time. And when I try to keep it in my pocket, so it's darkened most of the time as well. I don't it's much different from any other smartphone you've come across, to be honest.

**Will you buy a new smartphone soon?**

Well, I have no plans to. My current one does the job and it's always such a hassle to buy a new one and transfer everything over. And this one has some sentimental value too, since it was a gift, maybe for my next birthday. But certainly, I've nothing solid planned just yet.

**How has your mobile phone changed your life?**

**Brick (noun)**  - an early mobile phone that was thick and heavy compared to newer phones.

**Model (noun)**  - a particular type of machine, especially a car, that is slightly different from machines of the same type.

**To sync (verb)**  - to connect two electronic devices so that they both have the latest information or files. (informal for synchronize)

**Function (noun)**  - a process that a computer or a computer program uses to complete a task.

**Handheld (adj.)**  - a handheld object has been designed so that it can be held and used easily with one or two hands.

**Screen (noun)**  - a flat surface on a television or computer, or in a cinema, on which pictures or words are shown.

**Hassle (noun)**  - (a situation causing) difficulty or trouble.

**Sentimental (adj.)**  - related to feelings rather than reason.

**Limb (noun)**  - an arm or leg of a person or animal.

**To communicate (verb)**  - to share information with others by speaking, writing, moving your body, or using other signals.

**Taking Photos**

**Rory, do you like to take photographs?**

Well, I wouldn't mind taking them. But I wouldn't go and haven't gone out of my way to do either. I really tried to live in the moment these days and stopping to take a few snaps even for a moment tends to ruin the flow of that.

**Which kind of photos do you like to take?**

Well, I suppose there are two kinds. Ones that other people will definitely find interesting, or ones that can help me remember things without having to take up much space. So that would be things like scenic views of my home for my friends who live abroad, or ones of keepsakes that are a bit too bulky to carry with me. But once that I like to remember anyway, I think those kinds of photographs are quite practical.

**How did you become interested in photos?**

I haven't, though, when I do feel the need to take them, it's because the occasion calls for it or the situation demands it.

**How do you keep your photos?**

I have a few albums on my computer and drives, and they're organized by year. We also have some physical albums around the house that are organized by certain events or themes, but usually, they're just organized by the times they were taken.

**Do you ever delete or throw away photos if they are on paper?**

Well, if they're, I don't know, redundant or ruined, then there's no point keeping them. Otherwise, I prefer to hang on to them.

**Go out of your way**  - to try very hard to do something, especially for someone else.

**Snap (noun)**  - an informal photograph that is not very skillful or artistic.

**Ruin the flow**  - to kill the vibe/mood.

**Scenic (adj.)**  - having or allowing you to see beautiful natural features.

**Keepsake (noun)**  - something that helps you remember a person, place, or occasion.

**Bulky (adj.)**  - too big and taking up too much space.

**Theme (noun)**  - the main subject of a talk, book, film, etc..

**Redundant (adj.)**  - more than what is usual or necessary, esp. using extra words that mean the same thing.

**Drawing and Painting**

**To doodle (verb)**  - to draw pictures or patterns while thinking about something else or when you are bored.

**To wander (verb)**  - if your mind or your thoughts wander, you stop thinking about the subject that you should be giving your attention to and start thinking about other matters.

**Sporadic (adj.)**  - happening sometimes; not regular or continuous.

**To scribble (verb)**  - to write or draw something quickly or carelessly.

**Tone (noun)**  - a form or degree of a colour.

**Tint (noun)**  - a small amount of a colour.

**To critique (verb)**  - to give an opinion or judgment about a piece or work, book, film, etc.

**Novice (noun)**  - a person who is not experienced in a job or situation.

**In that respect**  - in that matter.

**Websites**

**Shortlist (noun)**  - a list of information.

**Salient (adj.)**  - most noticeable or important.

**Keep abreast of sth**  - to make sure you know all the most recent facts about a subject or situation.

**Artificial intelligence (AI)**  - the use of computer programs that have some of the qualities of the human mind, such as the ability to understand language, recognize pictures, and learn from experience.

**Simulator (noun)**  - a simulator is a device which artificially creates the effect of being in conditions of some kind.

**Social network (noun)**  - a website or computer program that allows people to communicate and share information on the internet using a computer or mobile phone.

**Site (noun)**  - a website.

**Layout (noun)**  - the way that something is arranged.

**Dreams**

**Cinema**

**Rory, do you like going to the cinema?**

I used to like it a lot, though, these days it's just more convenient for me to stream things online. You have to wait a bit for the latest blockbusters to come out though. So it's a bit of a wait. But it's not exactly the worst thing in the world, although you miss out on the popcorn, but at the same time, you don't have to wait in line for the tickets, for example.

**How often do you go to the cinema?**

Well, like I implied before, hardly ever these days. There's just too much to be getting on with. So spending time sitting in front of a giant screen isn't the best use of time, or at least I think so. If I had more time than I would.

**When was the last time you went to the cinema?**

I can remember it vividly, actually. I took my other half to see Godzilla vs. Kong at this huge mall where we used to live. The whole plot was ridiculous and the characters were inconsequential. But I did like the experience of eating popcorn and laughing at how silly everything was. And thankfully, the rows of seats were mostly empty. So it was okay to laugh out loud. Usually in the cinema, there's this sort of convention or unspoken rule that you don't make too much noise but we could, which was good.

**Did you usually go to the cinema when you were a child?**

Oh, I definitely used to go far more often when I was younger. There wasn't much of a choice, frankly, since my parents did all of the decision making in that regard. Based on what I can remember, though, I did enjoy myself. We used to watch the Disney classics, for example. So yeah, we went and we went fairly often.

**Сonvenient (adj.)**  - suitable for your purposes and needs and causing the least difficulty.

**Blockbuster (noun)**  - a book or film that is very successful.

**Miss out (phrasal verb)**  - to fail to use an opportunity to enjoy or get an advantage from something.

**To imply (verb)**  - to communicate an idea or feeling without saying it directly.

**Screen (noun)**  - a flat surface in a cinema, on a television, or as part of a computer, on which pictures or words are shown.

**Vividly (adverb)**  - in a way that is very clear, powerful, and detailed in your mind.

**Plot (noun)**  - the story of a book, film, play, etc.

**Ridiculous (adj.)**  - stupid or unreasonable and deserving to be laughed at.

**Inconsequential (adj.)**  - not important; able to be ignored.

**Convention (noun)**  - a usual or accepted way of behaving, especially in social situations, often following an old way of thinking or a custom in one particular society.

**To provoke (verb)**  - to cause a reaction, especially a negative one.

**Mindless fun**  - fun and not needing much mental effort.

**Insanity (noun)**  - an action that is stupid and likely to have extremely bad results.

**Storyline (noun)**  - (in a book, film, play, etc.) the plot (= the series of events that happen in it).

**Setting (noun)**  - the place where a film or play is recorded or performed, and the pictures, furniture, etc. that are used.

**Collective (adj.)**  - of or shared by every member of a group of people.

**Nostalgic (adj.)**  - feeling happy and also slightly sad when you think about things that happened in the past.

**Found footage film (noun)**  - a movie that's filmed to give the impression you are watching an actual video recording made by the people within the movie itself.

**Mockumentary (noun)**  - a film or television show made in the style of a documentary to make invented events seem real.

**To engross (verb)**  - if something engrosses you, it is so interesting that you give it all your attention.

**New Places**

**Have you been to a new place recently?**

Oh, too many to count, now I think about it. But the one that sticks out most would be the school I had to work out for my placement. It's only a few minutes up the road. But I'd never been there up until about six weeks ago. It was great. The students and staff are fantastic.

**Do you prefer visiting new places or going to the ones you know?**

Well, I suppose it depends on the company I'm keeping, really. If I'm with people I know in a place where comfortable, then that seems like a recipe for success. On the other hand, if I were, I don't know, in a more adventurous mood, I think going to a new place by myself might be quite fun.

**How often do you go to new places?**

Well, for the last 10 years it seems like that has happened literally every other day. Recently, though, since I moved back to my hometown, I haven't made a habit of it unless there's occasion called for it. I think that's true for many people, since there's like the whole global pandemic thing on right now.

**Have you ever moved into a new place or a new home?**

Oh, all the time. Like I say, especially over the last few years. I think I've moved house every year for the past seven years or something like that. Most recently back to my hometown in Dundee. Prior to that, I moved regularly as, well, my job changed around in Moscow. So I was just moving to different parts of the city.

**How did you feel about moving?**

Completely fine. I travel light, so I don't have a lot of things to pack. And usually it can all be moved in one go. So there's no stress there. Usually, I was quite keen to get to know a new part of town if it was Moscow, or a new part of the country if it was a place like Timor where we moved around a lot.

**To stick out (phrasal verb)**  - to be very easy to notice.

**A recipe for sth. (phrase)**  - an idea, situation, or method that is likely to result in something.

**Adventurous (adj.)**  - willing to try new or difficult things.

**Habit (noun)**  - something that you do often and regularly, sometimes without knowing that you are doing it.

**Call for sth. (phrasal verb)**  - to need or deserve a particular action, remark, or quality.

**Prior to sth.**  - before a particular time or event.

**Travel light**  - to bring very few things with you when you go somewhere.

**To crave (verb)**  - to have a very strong feeling of wanting something.

**Novelty (noun)**  - the quality of being new and unusual.

**Extrovert (noun)**  - an energetic person who enjoys being with other people.

**To thrive (verb)**  - to grow, develop, or be successful.

**Detrimental (adj.)**  - causing harm or damage.

**Driving**

**Rory, so let's talk about driving. Do you like driving?**

I haven't driven myself in about 10 years. Though, I like being driven places. It's less work and I can shut away or relax while someone else does the heavy lifting, so to speak.

**When was the last time you drove?**

I have to think about that. I mean, if we mean as a passenger being driven somewhere, then it would probably be to the nursery this morning for my placement. As a driver though I imagine the route I took when I took and ultimately failed my first and last practical driving test.

**Where do you like to sit in a car?**

Well, ideally, wherever is the most comfortable. Usually, that's in the front passenger seats. Since I can avoid any motion sickness and speak to the person driving. That is unless it's a taxi, as I really hate speaking to taxi drivers. Sorry, any taxi drivers listening to us. But I just want to sit and listen to music when that happens.

**Is driving common in your country?**

I would say so, yes. I think most people where we live are car owners, or at least know how to drive. In more deprived areas that might be less so but it's not like cars are an uncommon sight even at that.

**Is it hard to learn to drive?**

Well, since I've yet to pass my test, I would certainly say so. I think it's a rite of passage that most people fail once actually. I'd need to check statistics on that, of course, but a few of my friends have failed their driving test the first time. Maybe we just aren't so adept at test-taking, to be honest.

**Will you drive more in the future?**

**Shut away (phrasal verb)**  - to put something in a place where other people cannot see it or get it.

**So to speak (phrase)**  - used to explain that what you are saying is not to be understood exactly as stated.

**Route (noun)**  - a particular way or direction between places.

**Driving test (noun)**  - a test of someone's ability to drive a car, which they must pass in order to get a driving licence.

**Motion sickness (noun)**  - a feeling of being ill, especially of needing to vomit, that some people get in a moving vehicle.

**Deprived (adj.)**  - not having the things that are necessary for a pleasant life, such as enough money, food, or good living conditions.

**Uncommon (adj.)**  - not seen, happening, or experienced often.

**Rite (noun)**  - (a usually religious ceremony with) a set of fixed words and actions.

**Adept (adj.)**  - having a natural ability to do something that needs skill.

**To retake (verb)**  - to take an exam again because you failed it the first time.

**Drive sb up the wall (idiom)**  - to make someone extremely angry.

**Architecture**

**Facade (noun)**  - the front of a building, especially a large or attractive building.

**Decorative (adj.)**  - made to look attractive.

**Victorian (adj.)**  - relating to the period 1837 to 1901, when Victoria was Queen of England.

**Edward﻿ian (adj.)**  - from the period when Edward VII was king of England (1901

**Skyscraper (noun)**  - a very tall modern building, usually in a city.

**Residential (adj.)**  - a residential area or building is where people live.

**Commercial building (noun)**  - a building that is used for business activities.

**Listed building (noun)**  - a building of great historical or artistic value that has official protection to prevent it from being changed or destroyed.

**Czarist (adj.)**  - supporting or relating to the system of government of Russia until 1917 by a male Russian ruler.

**Harbour (noun)**  - an area of water next to the coast, often protected from the sea by a thick wall, where ships and boats can shelter.

**Aesthetically (adverb)**  - in a way that relates to the enjoyment or study of beauty.

**Reddish (adj.)**  - slightly red in colour.

**Interior (noun)**  - the inside part of something.

**National identity (noun)**  - the person's identity and sense of belonging to one state or to one nation, a feeling one shares with a group of people, regardless of one's citizenship status.

**Crammed (adj.)**  - very full of people or things.

**Elegant (adj.)**  - graceful and attractive in appearance or behaviour.

**Concentration 2.0**

**Rory, when is it hard for you to stay focused?**

Ah, well, I tend to get distracted when I have about a million things to do. I often flit from one task to the next without any sort of logical order to it, which isn't good for getting things done quickly. But I still do get them done. So perhaps it isn't such a big deal.

**Are you easily distracted?**

I suppose that depends on what the distraction is, really. Generally, I'm quite good at shutting out loud noises and background goings-on. However, if there's a message notification in front of me on my phone, then I'm almost compelled to investigate. That and I already mentioned that other tasks will distract me. So it's sort of a competition of productive tasks.

**What do you do to stay focused?**

Well, I like to think I'm generally a responsible, hardworking person, and I'm quite task-orientated. So I like getting the job done. Those character traits more than anything keep me working away until things get done. Plus, I like to imagine what I can do once all the hard work is out of the way.

**Why is it difficult for some people to stay focused?**

There are all kinds of reasons. I suppose the main ones are that they have a lot going on in their lives, and it's hard to prioritize, or they might have difficulty prioritizing in general, due to compromised executive function. Others have just never been taught the skill of working at things until they get done. And they give up after a very limited period of time.

**What improves concentration?**

Generally, a lack of distraction is the most useful thing. So if you have a minimalist approach to things going on, then you could probably focus more. At least that would be how it works in my case. You can also remove things that are drawing your attention away from what you should be doing. Or you could move yourself if you can.

**To distract (verb)**  - to make someone stop giving their attention to something.

**Flit (verb)**  - to fly or move quickly and lightly.

**Notification (noun)**  - a message that is automatically sent to you on your mobile phone or computer.

**Compel (verb)**  - to force someone to do something.

**Task** - orientated (adj.)

**Work away (at something) (phrasal verb)**  - to put effort (toward some task or activity).

**To prioritize (verb)**  - to decide which of a group of things are the most important so that you can deal with them first.

**Compromised (verb)**  - to allow your principles to be less strong or your standards or morals to be lower.

**Executive (noun)**  - relating to making decisions and managing businesses, or suitable for people with important jobs in business.

**Work at sth (phrasal verb)**  - to try hard to achieve something.

**Remove (verb)**  - to take something or someone away from somewhere, or off something.

**Draw away (phrasal verb)**  - to move away or ahead.

**Chip away at sth (phrasal verb)**  - to gradually reduce something so that it becomes smaller or weaker.

**Urgent (adj.)**  - very important and needing attention immediately.

**Flowers**

**Flowers. Rory, do you like flowers?**

Well, I'm hardly a flower fanatic, but I don't mind having them around. Unless there are many of them in full bloom, that can affect my allergy sometimes.

**What flowers do you like?**

I'm not averse to any kinds of flowers, really. I like them all to be honest. Well, unless, like I said, they're ones that make me sneeze. But those times and varieties are few and far in between.

**When was the last time you gave flowers to somebody?**

I remember it like it was yesterday, actually, because it's quite unusual for me. I bought my other half flowers in his favorite color about halfway through this year. I don't do it very often. And I can't remember the occasion. I just thought it would be a nice idea. Because I was walking past the florist next to the gym.

**Do you like sending flowers to others?**

Oh, I prefer something more practical over what's aesthetics, since I like helping people and so this tends to be easier to manifest by providing helpful things. But I think flowers are okay from time to time.

**What flowers have special meaning in your country?**

Well, the thistle is our national flower, although I'm not really sure why. There's a story behind it somewhere, but it escaped me. Heather is also associated with the more isolated and rugged parts of Scotland. Roses are seen as romantic. But I suppose that's more universal than nationalistic.

**Have you ever planted any flowers?**

**Fanatic (noun)**  - a person who is extremely interested in something, to a degree that some people find unreasonable.

**Be in bloom**  - to be producing flowers.

**Allergy (noun)**  - a condition that makes a person become sick or develop skin or breathing problems because they have eaten certain foods or been near

**Averse (adj.)**  - strongly disliking or opposed to.

**Few and far in between**  - not very many or not appearing very frequently.

**Florist (noun)**  - a shop that sells cut flowers and plants for inside the house.

**Aesthetic (adj.)**  - an aesthetic object or a work of art is one that shows great beauty.

**Thistle (noun)**  - a wild plant with sharp points on the leaves and, typically, purple flowers.

**Rugged (adj.)**  - (of land) wild and not even; not easy to travel over.

**Universal (adj.)**  - existing everywhere or involving everyone.

**Potted plant (noun)**  - a plant that is grown in a pot.

**Colours**

**Shades (noun)**  - a type or degree of a colour.

**Eye** - catching (adj.)

**The spectrum (noun)**  - the set of colours into which a beam of light can be separated, or a range of waves, such as light waves or radio waves.

**Stand out (phrasal verb)**  - to be very noticeable.

**Pastel purple**  - one of these colours:

**Garish colours (adj.)**  - unpleasantly bright colours.

**Show off (phrasal verb)**  - to behave in a way that is intended to attract attention or admiration, and that other people often find annoying.

**Lurid (adj.)**  - (especially of a description) shocking because involving violence, sex, or immoral activity.

**Sticks out (phrasal verb)**  - to be very easy to notice: he certainly sticks out in a crowd.

**Take something for granted (idiom)**  - to never think about something because you believe it will always be available or stay exactly the same: I took it for granted that I would find the perfect job.

**A mishmash (noun)**  - a confused mixture: The new housing development is a mishmash of different architectural styles.

**Colour scheme (noun)**  - a combination of colours that has been chosen for a particular room.

**The décor (noun)**  - the colour, style, and arrangement of the objects in a room.

**Vivid (adj.)**  - vivid descriptions, memories, etc. produce very clear, powerful, and detailed images in the mind.

**The fit (noun)**  - the way that something fits: these shoes are a perfect fit. The trousers were a good fit but the jacket was too small.

**A whole load of**  - a lot of something, often something unpleasant.

**Fit the mold**  - to be similar to other people or things or to what is usual: he didn’t exactly fit the mold of a typical headteacher.

**Tartan (noun)**  - a pattern of different coloured straight lines crossing each other at 90 degree angles, or a cloth with this pattern:

**Off the top of my head (idiom)**  - from the knowledge you have in your memory.

**Animals**

**Mammals (noun)**  - any animal of which the female feeds her young on milk from her own body. Most mammals give birth to live young, not eggs.

**Dog person (noun)**  - a person who keeps dogs as pets.

**Domesticated (adj.)**  - (of an animal) tame and kept as a pet or on a farm.

**Color scheme (adj.)**  - an arrangement or combination of colours, especially one used in interior decoration.

**Fur (noun)**  - the short, fine, soft hair of certain animals.

**Portray (verb)**  - describe (someone or something) in a particular way.

**Wander (verb)**  - walk or move in a leisurely or aimless way.

**To pet(verb)**  - stroke or pat (an animal) affectionately.

**Captivity (noun)**  - the condition of being imprisoned or confined.

**Allergic (adj.)**  - caused by or relating to an allergy.

**Hypoallergenic (adj.)**  - (especially of cosmetics and textiles) relatively unlikely to cause an allergic reaction.

**Therapeutic (adj.)**  - having a good effect on the body or mind; contributing to a sense of well

**Weather**

**Dreary (adj.)**  - boring and making you feel unhappy.

**Progressive (adj.)**  - developing or happening gradually

**Damp (adj.)**  - slightly wet, usually in an unpleasant way

**Torrential rain (phrase)**  - very heavy rain.

**Scorching (adj.)**  - very hot.

**Oxymoron (noun)**  - two words used together, which mean two different or opposite things, such as 'bitter

**Cloudburst (noun)**  - a sudden heavy fall of rain.

**Humidity (noun)**  - a measurement of how much water there is in the air:

**Lethargic (adj.)**  - having little energy; feeling unwilling and unable to do anything.

**To soak up (phrasal verb)**  - to enjoy the effects or experience of something as much as possible.

**Heatwave (noun)**  - a period of time such as a few weeks when the weather is much hotter than usual.

**To vegetate (verb)**  - to live in a way that has no physical and mental activity.

**Watching TV**

**What types of TV programs do you like to watch?**

l, I'm a big fan of science fiction series. I've been watching them ever since I can remember picking up a TV remote control. I used to like detective shows but I sort of fell out of watching those when I went to university. I really should go back to them, now that I think of it.

**Science fiction (noun)**  - books, films, or cartoons about an imagined future, especially about space travel or other planets.

**Series (noun)**  - a set of television or radio broadcasts on the same subject or using the same characters but in different situations.

**Remote control (noun)**  - a piece of equipment that you hold in your hand and use to control a television, DVD player, etc.

**Show (noun)**  - a theatre performance or a television or radio programme that is entertaining rather than serious.

**Fall out of something (phrasal verb)**  - to stop doing something

**To indulge (verb)**  - to allow yourself or another person to have something enjoyable, especially more than is good for you.

**The sky is the limit (idiom)**  - there's no limit.

**Time sink (noun)**  - a task that takes a long time or wastes someone's time.

**On the face of it**  - used when you are describing how a situation seems on the surface.

**Exposure (noun)**  - the fact of experiencing something or being affected by it because of being in a particular situation or place.

**Mores (plural noun)**  - the traditional customs and ways of behaving that are typical of a particular (part of) society.

**Spending time with others**

**Natter (noun)**  - a friendly conversation without any particular purpose, or an example of this.

**Competent (adj.)**  - having the skills or knowledge to do something well enough to meet a basic standard.

**Thrilled (adj.)**  - extremely happy about something.

**Hold out (phrasal verb)**  - to continue in a situation that is dangerous or difficult.

**Contingent on/upon sth**  - depending on something else in the future in order to happen.

**To exploit (verb)**  - to use someone or something unfairly for your own advantage.

**Head out (phrasal verb)**  - to go in a particular direction.

**Comparatively (adj.)**  - as compared to something else.

**To reminisce (verb)**  - to talk or write about past experiences that you remember with pleasure.

**Anecdote (noun)**  - a short, often funny story, especially about something someone has done.

**To cooperate (verb)**  - to act or work together for a particular purpose, or to be helpful by doing what someone asks you to do. (B2)

**Instance (noun)**  - a particular situation, event, or fact, especially an example of something that happens generally.

**To collaborate (verb)**  - to work with someone else for a special purpose. (C1)

**Parks and Gardens**

**Be past it (idiom)**  - to be too old to do something.

**Stroll (noun)**  - a slow relaxed walk, especially for pleasure.

**Weather permitting**  - if the weather is good enough to allow it.

**Lead (noun)**  - a piece of rope, chain, etc. tied to an animal, especially to a dog at its collar when taking it for a walk.

**Refreshing (adj.)**  - making you feel less hot or tired.

**Secluded (adj.)**  - quiet, private, and not near people, roads, or buildings.

**Safari park (noun)**  - a large park where wild animals are kept and can move freely, and can be watched by visitors driving through in their cars.

**Green space (noun)**  - space consisting of land (such as parks) rather than buildings.

**Shoes**

**How often do you buy shoes?**

Well, evidently not enough since the ones I'm wearing are falling to pieces. I think it's probably once a year, maybe slightly more of if I see a pair that I like.

**Have you ever bought shoes online?**

I think I've only ever done it once actually. And it ended rather badly for me. I thought they would be red, but they came in a different color. And I wasn't best pleased. So from now on, I head to the shoe shop when I want them, even if it is a bit inconvenient.

**What's your favorite type of shoes?**

I usually buy casual footwear from Skechers. It's a popular brand of shoes. They have quite a range, but only a small subset appeals to me really. I can't really remember the last time I bought anything even remotely formal. It's not necessary for work.

**Evidently (adverb)**  - used to say what people believe is true.

**Fall to pieces (phrase)**  - to break apart into smaller parts.

**Casual (adj.)**  - casual clothes are not formal or not suitable for special occasions.

**Footwear (noun)**  - shoes, boots, or any other outer covering for the human foot.

**To appeal (verb)**  - to interest or attract someone.

**Formal (adj.)**  - formal language, clothes, and behavior are suitable for serious or official occasions.

**Dichotomy (noun)**  - the division of two things that are completely different.

**Boot (noun)**  - a type of shoe that covers the whole foot and the lower part of the leg.

**Heel (noun)**  - the raised part at the back of a shoe, under your heel.

**Headphones**

**Do you use headphones?**

I used to before earphones and earbuds were a thing. They're more compact and easier to carry around with you than a full set of headphones. But I think someone said the sound quality is better.

**What type of headphones do you use?**

Well, like I said, I use earbuds which are wireless and smaller. I actually don't think I've worn headphones in years, to be honest with you.

**In what situations would you use headphones?**

If I did use them, I suppose it would be when I need a lot of noise cancellation to hear things clearly. Like if I was on the metro or somewhere loud. Oh, we use headphones for recording the podcast when we're in the studio.

**Do you usually use headphones when you listen to music?**

No, I use earbuds when I'm listening to music.

**Earphones (plural noun)**  - an electrical device that fits over or in your ears, allowing you to listen to a radio or a device that plays music.

**Earbuds (plural noun)**  - a small headphone that fits inside the ear against the outer opening of the ear canal.

**Compact (adj.)**  - consisting of parts that are positioned together closely or in a tidy way, using very little space.

**Wireless (adj.)**  - using a system of radio signals rather than wires to connect computers, mobile phones, etc. to each other.

**Noise cancellation (noun)**  - the blocking of outside noise so you don’t hear it.

**Proactive (adj.)**  - taking action by causing change and not only reacting to change when it happens.

**Remotely (adverb)**  - in the slightest degree.

**To resemble (verb.)**  - to look like or be like someone or something.

**Robots**

**Names**

**Combination (noun)**  - a joining or merging of different parts or qualities in which the component elements are individually distinct.

**Embarrassing (adj.)**  - causing (someone) to feel awkward, self

**Middle name (noun)**  - a person's name placed after the first name and before the surname.

**Surname (noun)**  - a hereditary name common to all members of a family, as distinct from a forename or given name.

**Unusual (noun)**  - not habitually or commonly occurring or done.

**Age**

**To be content with smth (phrase)**  - to be satisfied.

**Speculate (verb)**  - form a theory or conjecture about a subject without firm evidence.

**Confident (adj.)**  - feeling or showing confidence in oneself or one's abilities or qualities.

**Hectic (adj.)**  - full of incessant or frantic activity.

**Knowledgeable (adj.)**  - intelligent and well informed.

**Aspect (noun)**  - a particular part or feature of something.

**Accomodation**

**Convenience (noun)**  - the state of being able to proceed with something without difficulty.

**Bitterly (adverb)**  - to an extreme, forceful, or particularly harsh degree.

**Junk (noun)**  - old or discarded things that are considered useless or of little value.

**Rubbish (noun)**  - waste material; refuse or litter.

**Happen to do smth (phrase)**  - to do something by chance.

**Accommodation (noun)**  - a room, group of rooms, or building in which someone may live or stay.

**Water**

**Tap water (noun)**  - water from a piped supply.

**Reservoir (noun)**  - a large natural or artificial lake used as a source of water supply.

**Bottled water (noun)**  - water in bottles.

**Portable (adj.)**  - able to be easily carried or moved, especially because being of a lighter and smaller version than usual.

**To wear out (phrasal verb)**  - be used until no longer in good condition or working order.

**Water coolers (noun)**  - a dispenser of cooled drinking water, typically used in places of work.

**To maintain (verb)**  - to keep (something) at the same level or rate.

**Homeostasis (noun)** - a property of cells, tissues, and organisms that allows the maintenance and regulation of the stability and constancy needed to function properly.

**Jeans**

**Bread and butter (idiom)**  - used in reference to something everyday or ordinary.

**Preference (adj.)**  - a greater liking for one alternative over another or others.

**Bootcut jeans (noun)**  - with bootcut jeans, a boot leg is more narrow in the knee than in the leg opening.

**Dress** - down days (noun)

**Expressly (noun)**  - explicitly; clearly.

**Ascendancy (noun)**  - occupation of a position of dominant power or influence.

**To connect with smn/smth (phrase)**  - to have a positive or meaningful connection with an idea or a person, often quickly.

**Skinny jeans (noun)**  - tight

**Patience**

**To stress out (verb)**  - to experience emotional stress.

**Reservoir (noun)**  - a supply or source of something.

**Nauseous (adj.)**  - affected with nausea; feeling inclined to vomit.

**Impatient (adj.)**  - having or showing a tendency to be quickly irritated or provoked.

**Frustrating (adj.)**  - causing annoyance or upset because of an inability to change or achieve something.

**Queue (noun)**  - a line or sequence of people or vehicles awaiting their turn to be attended to or to proceed.

**To resort to smth (phrase)**  - to do or use (something) especially because no other choices are possible

**Animals**

**Mammals (noun)**  - any animal of which the female feeds her young on milk from her own body. Most mammals give birth to live young, not eggs.

**Dog person (noun)**  - a person who keeps dogs as pets.

**Domesticated (adj.)**  - (of an animal) tame and kept as a pet or on a farm.

**Color scheme (adj.)**  - an arrangement or combination of colours, especially one used in interior decoration.

**Fur (noun)**  - the short, fine, soft hair of certain animals.

**Portray (verb)**  - describe (someone or something) in a particular way.

**Wander (verb)**  - walk or move in a leisurely or aimless way.

**To pet(verb)**  - stroke or pat (an animal) affectionately.

**Captivity (noun)**  - the condition of being imprisoned or confined.

**Allergic (adj.)**  - caused by or relating to an allergy.

**Hypoallergenic (adj.)**  - (especially of cosmetics and textiles) relatively unlikely to cause an allergic reaction.

**Therapeutic (adj.)**  - having a good effect on the body or mind; contributing to a sense of well

**Sharing**

**Sentimental value (noun)**  - the value of an object deriving from personal or emotional associations rather than material worth.

**Sappy (adj.)**  - over

**Carpool (noun)**  - an arrangement between people to make a regular journey in a single vehicle, typically with each person taking turns to drive the others.

**Prevalent (adj.)**  - widespread in a particular area or at a particular time.

**Season Finale**

**Hairstyle**

**Salt and pepper look (idiom) — salt** - and

**Perfume**

**Teamwork**

**Pens**

**Roller ball pen (noun) — or roll pens are pens which use ball point writing mechanisms with water** - based liquid or gelled ink, as opposed to the oil

**Gel pen (noun) — a gel pen uses ink in which pigment is suspended in a water** - based gel. Because the ink is thick and opaque, it shows up more clearly on dark or slick surfaces than the typical inks used in ballpoint or felt tip pens

**Art**

**Lost on one (phrasal verb)**  - to have little or no impact or effect on one; to not be valued, appreciated, or understood by one.

**Books**

**Article (noun)**  - a piece of writing included with others in a newspaper, magazine, or other publication.

**E** - books (adj.) — an electronic version of a printed book that can be read on a computer or a specifically designed handheld device.

**Coffee**

**Toys**

**Die** - cast toy (noun) — a toy or a collectible model produced by using the die casting method of putting molten lead, zinc alloy or plastic in a mold to produce a particular shape.

**Boredom**

**Irrelevant (adj.)**  - not connected with or relevant to something.

**Science**

**Superfluous (adj.)**  - unnecessary, especially through being more than enough.

**Cake**

**Self** - control (e.g. to exercise self control) (n.) — the ability to control your behavior and not show strong emotions such as anger or sadness.

**Sticky toffee pudding (n.) — is an English dessert consisting of a very moist sponge cake, covered in a toffee sauce and often served with a vanilla custard or vanilla ice** - cream.

**Dreams**

**Morning routine**

**To go through the motion (idiom)**  - to do something without having much interest in it.

**Crowded Places**

**Plants**

**Food**

**Seasons**

**Snow** - capped (adj.) — snow

**Films**

**Action** - packed (adj.) — full of activity or excitement.

**Knee** - jerk (adj.) — a knee

**Friends and Friendship**

**Hotels**

**Social Media**

**User** - friendly (adj.) — a user

**Insects**

**Numbers**

**Health**

**History**

**Public Transport**

**Non** - peak/Off

**Music**

**Handwriting 2**

**So, Rory, do you often write things?**

I think I wrote something down just about every other day, whether it's university notes or something I need to remember in my diary, it sounds pretty old-school, but there's evidence to suggest that if you write things down, then they stick in your head longer.

**Do you prefer to write by hand or write using a computer?**

Oh, almost exclusively with a pen and paper. I really don't like typing, even if it can be faster and more effective in terms of storage and options to edit. It's just the way I was brought up, and it's how my head works.

**Do you often write things with a pen?**

Again, almost always, I can't imagine writing with a pencil these days. Possibly I would draw with one but if I'm presented with a choice, then it's got to be a pen. And ideally, a fine-tipped one at that.

**Is your handwriting easy to read?**

Well, I certainly like to think so. Though, if I'm ever in a rush, then sometimes it can be messy and difficult to read, but it's hardly doctor's handwriting levels of eligibility. Especially since I usually write in block capitals, for example.

**How did you learn to write?**

Well, I'm not sure actually. Usually, start when you're quite young. So those early days are sort of lost to the mists of time. I did read a paper though that said, there are stages where it's just nonsense of scribbling. Then words with correct endings, and then fully-fledged words. It's an oversimplification, of course, but it was probably something like that for me.

**Did you like writing things when you were a child?**

**Wrote down sth. (phrasal verb)**  - to record information on paper.

**Old** - school (adj.)

**Typing (noun)**  - using a computer keyboard or a typewriter to produce documents or text.

**Fine** - tipped pen (noun)

**Messy (adj.)**  - untidy.

**Eligibility (noun)**  - the fact of having the necessary qualities or satisfying the necessary conditions.

**Block capitals (noun)**  - a style of writing in which each letter of a word is written separately and clearly using the capital letters of the alphabet.

**The mists of time**  - used to show that something happened a very long time ago and is difficult to remember clearly.

**Scribbling (noun)**  - a careless piece of writing or drawing.

**Fully** - fledged (adj.)

**Oversimplification (noun)**  - the action of describing or explaining something in such a simple way that it is no longer correct or true.

**Insistence (noun)**  - an occasion when you demand something and refuse to accept opposition, or when you say firmly that something is true.

**Slip off (phrasal verb)**  - to fall away from or off someone or something.

**Shopping**

**Brick** - and

**Staying up late**

- ish (suffix) — A suffix that makes any word or phrase more vague.

**To pull an all** - nighter (idiom) — to stay up all night.

**Circadian rhythm (noun) — a 24** - hour internal clock that is running in the background of your brain and cycles between sleepiness and alertness at regular intervals. It’s also known as your sleep/wake cycle.

**Laughter**

**Holiday**

**Languages**

**Rubbish**

**To fly** - tip (verb) — the term is derived from the verb tip, meaning “to throw out of a vehicle”, and on the fly, meaning “on the wing” — to throw away carelessly or casually.

**Tidiness**

**Drawer (noun) — a box** - shaped storage compartment without a lid, made to slide horizontally in and out of a desk, chest, or other piece of furniture.

**Orderly (adj.) — neat, tidy, and well** - organized.

**Clothes**

**Industrious (adj.) —diligent and hard** - working.

**Meeting new people**

**Mobile phones**

**Ill** - advised (adj.) — not wise, and likely to cause problems in the future.

**Self** - contained (adj.) — (of a thing) complete, or having all that is needed, in itself.

**Baking**

**Goals**

**Long** - term (adj.) — happening, existing, or continuing for many years or far into the future.

**Short** - term (adj.) — happening, existing, or continuing for only a little time.

**Maps**

**Bicycles**

**Parks**

**Mental health (noun) — a person’s condition with regard to their psychological and emotional well** - being.

**Neighborhood**

**Foodstuff (noun)**  - a substance suitable for consumption as food.

**To poke around (phrasal verb)**  - to search for something by moving things around, usually not in a very careful or organized way.

**Well** - off (adj.)

**Foreseeable (adj.)**  - a foreseeable event or situation is one that can be known about or guessed before it happens.

**Newspapers**

**Mental health (noun)**  - a person’s condition with regard to their psychological and emotional well

**Take on smth (phrase)**  - someone's perspective, opinion, or idea(s) about something.

**Picnics**

**Concentration**

**Self** - directed (adj.) — making your own decisions and organizing your own work rather than being told what to do by managers, teachers, etc.

**The matter at hand (phrase)**  - the issue, topic, or task that is currently being discussed or is the current priority.

**New Activities**

**Fish and fishing**

**Prospect (noun)**  - the possibility or likelihood of some future event occurring.

**To romanticize (verb)**  - deal with or describe in an idealized or unrealistic fashion; make (something) seem better or more appealing than it really is.

**Reservoir (noun)**  - a large natural or artificial lake used as a source of water supply.

**Patience of a saint (idiom)**  - to always be calm and never allow anything to upset you.

**Fillet (noun)**  - a fleshy boneless piece of meat from near the loins or the ribs of an animal.

**Fishmonger (noun)**  - a person or shop that sells fish for food.

**Fish scale (noun)**  - is a small rigid plate that grows out of the skin of a fish.

**To scale fish (verb)**  - remove scale or scales from a fish.

**Being in a hurry**

**To be in a hurry/rush (phrase)**  - to move or act with speed or haste.

**To plan out (phrasal verb)**  - to plan carefully and in detail something that you are going to do in the future.

**Scramble (noun)**  - a hurried attempt to get something.

**Thorough (adj.)**  - detailed and careful.

**To breeze through (idiom)**  - to achieve something very easily.

**To get smth out of the road (phrase)**  - to get smth out of the way.

**To paint very broad strokes (idiom)**  - if you describe or show something in broad strokes or in broad brushstrokes, you describe or show only the main or general points or features of it and not the fine or exact details.

**Weekend**

**To/A lie in (noun/phrasal verb)**  - the time you/to remain in bed after the normal time for getting up.

**Brunch (noun)**  - a late morning meal eaten instead of breakfast and lunch.

**Frenetic (adj.)**  - fast and energetic in a rather wild and uncontrolled way.

**To take smth for granted (phrase)**  - to never think about something because you believe it will always be available or stay exactly the same

**Frivolous (adj.)**  - not having any serious purpose or value.

**To go amiss (phrase)**  - to be unhelpful or inappropriate

**Hoo** - ha (idiom)

**Intermission (noun)**  - a pause or break.

**The daily grind (noun)**  - the difficult, routine, or monotonous tasks of daily work.

**Text messages**

**Necessity (noun)**  - an indispensable thing.

**Scarcely (adv.)**  - only just; almost not.

**Keep in touch (idiom)**  - to continue to talk to or write to someone.

**Technophobe (adj.)**  - a person who fears, dislikes, or avoids new technology.

**Content (noun)**  - information made available by a website or other electronic medium.

**Multitask (verb)**  - deal with more than one task at the same time.

**Pressuring (adj.)**  - attempting to persuade or coerce (someone) into doing something.

**Phone service provider (noun)**  - a company that offers transmission services to users of wireless devices (smartphones and tablet PCs) through radio frequency (RF) signals rather than through end

**Scam (noun)**  - a dishonest scheme; a fraud.

**Gifts**

**Synonymous (adj.)**  - if you say that one thing is synonymous with another, you mean that the two things are so closely connected in most people's minds that one suggests the other.

**To pay a compliment (phrase)**  - to say something nice about someone or to someone.

**To overhear (verb)**  - to hear what other people are saying without intending to and without their knowledge.

**Bog** - standard (adj.)

**To shell out (phrasal verb)**  - to pay money for something, especially when the cost is unexpected and not wanted.

**To reverse (verb)**  - to change the direction, order, position, result, etc. of something to its opposite.

**A plethora (noun)**  - a very large amount of something, especially a larger amount than you need, want, or can deal with.

**The done thing (noun)**  - If you say that something is the done thing, you mean it is the most socially acceptable way to behave.

**Tailor** - made (adj.)

**Representation (noun)**  - the way that someone or something is shown or described.

**Furniture**

**Item (noun)**  - an individual article or unit, especially one that is part of a list, collection, or set.

**Chest of drawers (noun)**  - a piece of furniture with drawers in which you keep things such as clothes.

**Technically (adverb)**  - something technically true is actually, really true or correct but it may not be the way people think about it. For example, although people call a tomato a vegetable, technically it's a fruit.

**Posture (noun)**  - the way in which someone usually holds their shoulders, neck, and back, or a particular position in which someone stands, sits, etc.

**Furniture store (noun)**  - a shop that sells the movable, generally functional, articles that equip a room, house, etc.

**Three** - piece suite (noun)

**Standing desk (noun)**  - a desk at which you stand rather than sit.

**Decor (noun)**  - the colour, style, and arrangement of the objects in a room.

**Change**

**Routine (noun)**  - your usual way of doing things, especially when you do them in a fixed order at the same time.

**To gain (verb)**  - to get or achieve something, usually as a result of a lot of effort.

**Competency (noun)**  - the ability to do something successfully or efficiently.

**Worthwhile (adj.)**  - worth the time, money, or effort spent; of value or importance.

**Ongoing (adj.)**  - continuing; still in progress.

**To go all in (phrase)**  - to fully commit to a task or endeavor; to give or be prepared to give all of one's energy or resources toward something.

**Major (adj.)**  - important, serious, or significant.

**Minor (adj.)**  - lesser in importance, seriousness, or significance.

**Sport**

**Mainstream/mainstay (noun/adj.)**  - mainstream describes what's viewed by most people in a society as "normal," like the mainstream view that everyone should get married, move to the suburbs, and have children as soon as they can. Something that's mainstream is conventional, or the usual way of doing things.

**The odd (adj)**  - happening or occurring infrequently and irregularly; occasional.

**In the passing (phrase)**  - briefly and casually.

**To tickle smb's fancy (phrase)**  - If something tickles your fancy, you like it and want to have it.

**Renowned (adj.)**  - known or talked about by many people; famous.

**Bookworm (noun)**  - a person who reads a lot.

**Martial arts (noun)**  - a sport that is a traditional Japanese or Chinese form of fighting or defending yourself.

**To network (verb)**  - to meet people who might be useful to know, especially in your job.

**To have a lot on one's plate (idiom)**  - to have a great deal (or too much) to cope with.

**To take up (phrasal verb)**  - to start doing something regularly as a habit, job, or interest.

**Work and Studies**

**Qualification (noun)**  - an official record showing that you have finished a training course or have the necessary skills, etc.

**Deficit (noun)**  - the amount by which something, especially an amount of money, is smaller than it should be.

**Frustrating (adj.)**  - making you feel annoyed or less confident because you cannot achieve what you want.

**Disorganized (adj.)**  - not good at planning or organizing things.

**A/To struggle (noun/verb)**  - a very difficult task that you can do only by making a great effort/to experience difficulty and make a very great effort in order to do something.

**Profession (noun)**  - any type of work that needs special training or a particular skill, often one that is respected because it involves a high level of education.

**Focus (noun)**  - the main or central point of something, especially of attention or interest.

**Recycling**

**To last (verb)**  - to continue to exist.

**To contain (verb)**  - to have something inside or include something as a part.

**Comprehensive (adj.)**  - complete and including everything that is necessary.

**Mandatory (adj.)**  - something that is mandatory must be done, or is demanded by law.

**Voluntary (adj.)**  - done, made, or given willingly, without being forced or paid to do it.

**Ordinance (noun)**  - a law or rule made by a government or authority.

**Color coded (adj.)**  - If a set of objects such as books or wires are colour

**Environmentally friendly (adj.)**  - not harmful to the environment.

**Infrastructure (noun)**  - the basic systems and services, such as transport and power supplies, that a country or organization uses in order to work effectively.

**Making Lists**

**To fly by the seat of your pants (idiom)**  - to do something difficult without the necessary skill or experience (like to pilot an aircraft without the aid of instruments and without a flight plan, using only instinct, visual observation, and practical judgment)

**Tick (noun)**  - a mark (✓) that shows that something is correct or has been done.

**To crop up (phrasal verb)**  - to happen or appear unexpectedly.

**To carry smth over (phrasal verb)**  - to use or do something at a later time than planned.

**To thrive (verb)**  - to grow, develop, or be successful.

**To cramp (verb)**  - to limit someone, especially to prevent them from enjoying a full life.

**The merits of smth (noun)**  - the advantages something has compared to something else.

**Portable (adj.)**  - light and small enough to be easily carried or moved.

**Go** - to (adj.)

**Famous People**

**To appreciate (verb)**  - to recognize how good someone or something is and to value him, her, or it.

**Engaging (adj.)**  - pleasant, attractive, and charming.

**Charisma (noun)**  - a special power that some people have naturally that makes them able to influence other people and attract their attention and admiration.

**Aura (noun)**  - a feeling or character that a person or place seems to have.

**Star** - struck (adj.)

**Diva (noun)**  - a very successful and famous female singer or actor:

**To cancel smbd (verb)**  - to completely reject and stop supporting someone, especially because they have said something that offends you.

**To dominate (verb)**  - to be the largest, most important, or most noticeable part of something.

**Figure (noun)**  - a particular type of figure is a person with that characteristic.

**To pop up (phrasal verb)**  - to appear or happen, especially suddenly or unexpectedly.

**Petty (adj.)**  - not important and not worth giving attention to.

**Silver screen (noun)**  - the film industry.

**Hometown**

**For the better (idiom)**  - so as to produce improvement.

**To indulge (verb.)**  - allow oneself to enjoy the pleasure of.

**Tapestry (noun)**  - used in reference to an intricate or complex sequence of events.

**Nooks and crannies (idiom)**  - a place or part of a place, especially small or remote.

**Touchstone (adj.)**  - a standard or criterion by which something is judged or recognized.

**To revamp (verb)**  - give new and improved form, structure, or appearance to.

**Tangible (adj.)**  - capable of being touched; discernible by the touch; material or substantial. real or actual, rather than imaginary or visionary.

**Blight (noun)**  - something that spoils or has a very bad effect on something, often for a long time.

**Social crusade (noun)**  - usually refers to a person who makes social justice and equality their primary priority.

**Vast majority of smth (phrase)**  - used when you want to emphasize that something is true about almost all of a group of people or things.

**Rat race (noun)**  - a way of life in which people are caught up in a fiercely competitive struggle for wealth or power.

**For good (phrase)**  - permanently.

**Jokes**

**Due to (phrase)**  - because of; owing to.

**To make light of (phrase)**  - to act as if something is not serious, esp. when it is serious.

**To bam off (slang)**  - to show off.

**To crack a joke (phrase)**  - to tell a joke.

**To lose the plot (phrase)**  - to no longer be able to act normally or understand what is happening.

**Anecdote (noun)**  - a short, often funny story, especially about something someone has done.

**Tolerant (adj.)**  - willing to accept behavior and beliefs that are different from your own, although you might not agree with or approve of them.

**Pitch** - black (adj.)

**To push the envelope (idiom)**  - to behave in more extreme ways, or to try new things that have not been acceptable or tried before.

**Discussions**

**Blether (noun)**  - long

**To think up (phrasal verb)**  - to use one's mind to form or invent (something).

**To enjoy the ride (phrase)**  - means to simply enjoy something which is about to unfold.

**Side effect (noun)**  - any additional result that you did not expect or want

**Gregarious (adj.)**  - a gregarious person enjoys being with other people.

**Revelatory (adj.)**  - providing information that was previously secret, hidden, or not known

**To go on a rant (phrase)**  - to utter (something) in loud, violent, or bombastic tones.

**To begrudge (verb)**  - to feel unhappy about spending money on something or spending time doing something.

**Borrowing Things**

**Tremendous (adj.)**  - very great in amount, scale, or intensity.

**Self** - sufficient (adj.)

**To pose a problem (phrase)**  - if something poses a problem or a danger, it is the cause of that problem or danger.

**To loan (verb)**  - end (a sum of money or item of property).

**To cope (verb)**  - to deal successfully with a difficult situation.

**Careless (adj.)**  - not taking or showing enough care and attention.

**To purge (verb.)**  - to remove something bad or wrong.

**To be through with smth (phrase)**  - to have finished doing something or using something

**Finite (adj.)**  - limited in size or extent.

**Your Country**

**Diverse (adj.)**  - including many different types of people or things.

**Varied (adj.)**  - containing or changing between several different things or types.

**A contribution/ make a contribution (noun/collocation)**  - something that you contribute or do to help produce or achieve something together with other people, or to help make something successful.

**Rugged (adj.)**  - (of land) wild and not even; not easy to travel over; strong and simple; not delicate.

**Westernmost (adj.)**  - furthest towards the west of an area.

**A trait (noun)**  - a particular characteristic that can produce a particular type of behaviour.

**A coastline (noun)**  - the particular shape of the coast, especially as seen from above, from the sea, or on a map:

**Hospitality industry (collocation)**  - is a broad category of fields within the service industry that includes lodging, food and drink service, event planning, theme parks, and transportation. It includes hotels, restaurants and bars.

**Mainstay (noun)**  - the most important part of something, providing support for everything else.

**Kilts (noun)**  - a skirt with many folds, made from tartan cloth and traditionally worn by Scottish men and boys:

**Haggis (noun)**  - a dish from Scotland consisting of different sheep's organs cut up with onions and spices and cooked inside a sheep's stomach:

**Prosperous (adj.)**  - successful, usually by earning a lot of money.

**Strike a balance between (idiom)**  - if you strike a balance between two things, you accept parts of both things in order to satisfy some of the demands of both sides in an argument, rather than all the demands of just one side.

**A downside of (noun)**  - a disadvantage of a situation.

**Detrimental (adj.)**  - causing harm or damage; These chemicals have a detrimental effect/impact on the environment.

**Colours**

**Shades (noun)**  - a type or degree of a colour.

**Eye** - catching (adj.)

**The spectrum (noun)**  - the set of colours into which a beam of light can be separated, or a range of waves, such as light waves or radio waves.

**Stand out (phrasal verb)**  - to be very noticeable.

**Pastel purple**  - one of these colours:

**Garish colours (adj.)**  - unpleasantly bright colours.

**Show off (phrasal verb)**  - to behave in a way that is intended to attract attention or admiration, and that other people often find annoying.

**Lurid (adj.)**  - (especially of a description) shocking because involving violence, sex, or immoral activity.

**Sticks out (phrasal verb)**  - to be very easy to notice: he certainly sticks out in a crowd.

**Take something for granted (idiom)**  - to never think about something because you believe it will always be available or stay exactly the same: I took it for granted that I would find the perfect job.

**A mishmash (noun)**  - a confused mixture: The new housing development is a mishmash of different architectural styles.

**Colour scheme (noun)**  - a combination of colours that has been chosen for a particular room.

**The décor (noun)**  - the colour, style, and arrangement of the objects in a room.

**Vivid (adj.)**  - vivid descriptions, memories, etc. produce very clear, powerful, and detailed images in the mind.

**The fit (noun)**  - the way that something fits: these shoes are a perfect fit. The trousers were a good fit but the jacket was too small.

**A whole load of**  - a lot of something, often something unpleasant.

**Fit the mold**  - to be similar to other people or things or to what is usual: he didn’t exactly fit the mold of a typical headteacher.

**Tartan (noun)**  - a pattern of different coloured straight lines crossing each other at 90 degree angles, or a cloth with this pattern:

**Off the top of my head (idiom)**  - from the knowledge you have in your memory.

**Home**

**Vividly (adverb)**  - in a way that is very clear, powerful, and detailed in your mind: I vividly remember my first day at school.

**Spacious (adj.)**  - large and with a lot of space: a spacious house/living room.

**Well** - equipped (adj.)

**Massive (adj.)**  - very large in size, amount, or number.

**The skyline (noun.)**  - a shape or pattern made against the sky, especially by buildings:

**A cluster of**  - a group of similar things that are close together, sometimes surrounding something: Have a look at the cluster of galaxies in this photograph.

**At/on short notice**  - only a short time before something happens: I can't cancel my plans at such short notice.

**Waistline (noun.)**  - an imaginary line going round the narrowest part of your waist.

**Packed/squashed like sardines (idiom)**  - if people are packed or squashed like sardines, they are positioned very close together so that they cannot move: We were squashed like sardines in the rush

**Luxurious (adj.)**  - very comfortable and expensive: They have a very luxurious house.

**The décor (noun.)**  - the colour, style, and arrangement of the objects in a room.

**Inclination (noun.)**  - a feeling that you want to do a particular thing, or the fact that you prefer or are more likely to do a particular thing: My own inclination would be to look for another job.

**Interior design (noun.)**  - the art of planning the decoration of the inside of a building such as a house or office.

**The seafront (noun phrase)**  - the part of a town on the coast next to the beach, often with a road along it and a row of houses and shops facing the sea: We rented a house on the seafront for the summer.

**Packages (noun.)**  - an object or set of objects wrapped in paper, usually in order to be sent by post:

**Smiling**

**I'm not entirely sold on something**  - not believing that something is very good: I’m not completely sold on that idea.

**Amusing (adj.)**  - entertaining, making someone laugh.

**Flawless (adj.)**  - perfect or without mistakes: a flawless performance

**Hilarious (adj.)**  - extremely funny and causing a lot of laughter.

**Predatory (adj.)**  - a predatory animal kills and eats other animals.

**Apparently (adverb)**  - used to say you have read or been told something although you are not certain it is true.

**Conscious (adj.)**  - awake, thinking, and knowing what is happening around you.

**Unconscious (adj.)**  - an unconscious thought or feeling is one that you do not know you have.

**Genuine (adj.)**  - if something is genuine, it is real and exactly what it appears to be: genuine leather.

**Duplicitous (adj.)**  - involving duplicity: a duplicitous traitor/spy/politician. Duplicity

**Help out (phrasal verb)**  - if you help out, you do a part of someone's work or give someone money.

**Squawk (verb)**  - to shout, scream, or cry in a loud, unpleasant way: The baby never stopped squawking all night.

**Squabble (verb)**  - to argue over something that is not important:

**Reluctant (adj.)**  - not willing to do something and therefore slow to do it: [ + to infinitive ] I was having such a good time I was reluctant to leave.

**Awkward (adj.)**  - difficult to use, do, or deal with; causing problems, worry, or embarrassment: an awkward position/situation; embarrassed or nervous: I always feel awkward when I'm with Chris

**Out of the corner of your eye**  - without looking at something directly: I was watching TV when I saw something move out of the corner of my eye.

**Dimples (noun)** - a small hollow place, especially one that appears on a person's face when they smile: Bob was an angelic

**Hold a smile (collocation)**  - keep a smile; continue smiling.

**A curse (noun)** - magic words that are intended to bring bad luck to someone; a cause of trouble and unhappiness: Noise is the curse of modern city life.

**A blessing (noun)** - something that is extremely lucky or makes you happy: It was a blessing that no one was killed in the accident.

**Evenings**

**Let's talk about evenings. What do you often do in the evening?**

It's a pretty set routine to be honest. On Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, I'll go to the gym after school and then hit home, have dinner and go to bed. And Tuesday and Friday are a bit more open, and sometimes I go out or have people around. But more often I'll do work like writing, so, well, either way, it's not terribly riveting, sadly.

**Do you do the same thing every evening?**

Well, not exactly the same thing, except just before bed. I'll always brush my teeth, get changed into my jammies and apply moisturizer and then it's lights out.

**Do you prefer to spend your evening with family or friends?**

I actually prefer to spend it by myself. So I spend the whole day around people, but if I have to spend it with people, I don't mind which group to be honest. I suppose my friends are more accessible at the moment. So I'd spend it with them. But that's more by virtue of proximity than preference.

**Do you ever work or study in the evenings?**

Well, I try not to these days, but it happens sometimes when there's a lot to do. So usually I'll set aside an hour or so for it and no more but it has a hub of escalating still sometimes.

**What's a popular activity for people in your country in the evenings?**

**By virtue of smth (phrase)**  - because of, or as a result of

**Ads**

**Billboard (noun)**  - a very large board on which advertisements are shown, especially at the side of a road.

**Viral marketing (noun)**  - a marketing activity in which information about a product spreads between people, especially on the internet.

**Cookie (noun)**  - a piece of information stored on your computer about internet documents that you have looked at.

**Tailor** - made (adj.)

**Branded (adj.)**  - made by a particular company and sold under a particular name.

**Slogans (noun)**  - a short easily remembered phrase, especially one used to advertise an idea or a product.

**In a nutshell**  - very briefly, giving only the main points.

**Word** - of

**Car trips**

**Rory, do you like traveling by car?**

Oh, when I'm not the one doing the driving I do, especially by taxi in Moscow. I love looking at the window and enjoying the views of the city as they roll past. I'll really miss them when I have to leave actually.

**What's the farthest place you've traveled to by car?**

Oh, we used to travel to a village in England where one of our friends lived and that. Well, it seemed to take forever anyway, at the time. I think it was about 300 miles or something, which isn't much when you think about it, especially if you're living in Russia. But when I was a child, that seemed like a lot.

**Do you like to sit in the front or back when you're traveling by car?**

Oh God, even in the front if I can help it. I sometimes get motion sickness, and I like having more room for my feet. But sometimes others with more severe issues sort of take precedence. And I'm quite happy to let them do that.

**When do you usually travel by car?**

Oh, whenever I can. Like I said, I really love taking taxis in Moscow. It's really decadent. I know. But I love it. They get me from A to B with minimal effort.

**Motion sickness (noun)**  - a feeling of being ill, especially of needing to vomit, that some people get in a moving vehicle.

**Room (noun)**  - the amount of space that someone or something needs.

**Precedence (noun)**  - the condition of being dealt with before other things or of being considered more important than other things.

**Decadent (adj.)**  - a decadent person or group has low moral standards.

**Beam (verb)**  - to send out a line of light.

**Environmental Protection**

**Rory, let's talk about environmental protection. What can people do to protect our environment?**

They could just be sensible in terms of waste disposal. Not littering is a good start by buying biodegradable and sustainable products, recycling. Small changes like that. I think that would go a long way to fixing a lot of problems.

**Do you think we've done enough to protect the environment?**

I don't even know how to begin to measure that. I'm pretty frugal, and I don't travel much. And when I do, it's by mass transit or public transport. So I think my impact on the environment is pretty minimal in comparison to some people. I could probably do more in terms of saving paper and recycling, though, if I really wanted to.

**What can people do together to protect the local environment?**

I don't think there's a limit in this sense. Sharing resources might be a good place to start and helping remind each other of different agreed ways to reduce our impacts, although not being complete Karen about at the same time, and picking up the slack wherever they see it.

**Disposal (noun)**  - the act of getting rid of something, especially by throwing it away.

**Biodegradable (adj.)**  - able to decay naturally and in a way that is not harmful.

**Sustainable (adj.)**  - causing little or no damage to the environment and therefore able to continue for a long time.

**Recycling (noun)**  - the process of collecting and changing old paper, glass, plastic, etc. so that it can be used again.

**Frugal (adj.)**  - careful when using money or food, or (of a meal) cheap or small in amount.

**Environmentalism (noun)**  - an interest in or the study of the environment, in order to protect it from damage by human activities.

**Integrate (verb)**  - to combine two or more things in order to become more effective.

**Holistic (adj.)**  - dealing with or treating the whole of something or someone and not just a part.

**Special Costumes**

**Rory, let's talk about special costumes. Do you like to wear special costumes, Rory?**

Not really. No. I don't even like Halloween when everyone gets dressed up. I just think it's a lot of effort for not much reward, to be honest with you. Even when I wear my kilt. It's not for me. It's more for other people around me. They're usually curious about it and the colors and patterns and have lots of questions about it. But it doesn't really do much for me, I'm afraid.

**Did you wear any special costumes when you were young?**

I think one of the reasons why I'm not a great fan of costumes now is because of the ones my parents used to force on me when I was younger. I never quite got into it, even though they were obviously really big fans of the idea. There were ones for Halloween, fancy dress parties, and some birthdays. But still, it was never really my thing.

**When was the last time you wore a special costume?**

Well, I wore my kilt in Yegoryevsk, so people could take pictures and ask questions about the culture and history behind it. To be honest, though, in this sense, it was more of a prop than a costume, really.

**Do you ever buy special costumes?**

Oh, absolutely no. I think it's a huge waste of money in my opinion. Like even my kilt was a gift. It cost my parents an absolute fortune to have handmade.

**Where can people go to buy special costumes?**

**Kilt (noun)**  - a skirt with many folds, made from tartan cloth and traditionally worn by Scottish men and boys.

**To force smth on smn (phrasal verb ;))**  - to make someone accept something that they do not want.

**Dress party (noun)**  - a costume party (American English) or a fancy dress party (British English) is a type of party, common mainly in contemporary Western culture, where many of the guests are dressed up in costumes.

**Not my thing (phrase)**  - its not something you enjoy.

**Fortune (noun)**  - a large amount of money, goods, property, etc.

**Tailor** - made (adj.)

**Prop (noun)**  - an object used by the actors performing in a play or film.

**Wild Animals**

**Distinguished (adj.)**  - respected and admired for excellence.

**Camouflage (noun)**  - the way that the colour or shape of an animal or plant appears to mix with its natural environment to prevent it from being seen and attacked.

**Grub (noun)**  - an insect in the stage when it has just come out of its egg.

**Melancholic (adj.)**  - expressing feelings of sadness.

**Trapped in (phrasal verb)**  - kept in.

**Habitat (noun)**  - the natural environment in which an animal or plant usually lives.

**Captivity (noun)**  - the situation in which a person or animal is kept somewhere and is not allowed to leave.

**Biodiversity (noun)**  - the number and types of plants and animals that exist in a particular area or in the world generally, or the problem of protecting this.

**Endangered species (adj.)**  - animals or plants that may soon not exist because there are very few now alive.

**Applicable (adj.)**  - affecting or relating to a person or thing.

**Poach (verb)**  - to catch and kill animals without permission on someone else's land.

**Termite (noun)**  - a small tropical insect that eats wood.

**Breadth (noun)**  - the fact of including many different things, features, subjects, or qualities.

**Wild** - goose chase (noun)

**Sky and Stars**

**Rory, let's talk about the sky and stars. Do you like to watch the sky?**

No, as much as I used to. There's a lot of light pollution in my hometown and in Moscow as a matter of fact. But when I do go home and there's a clear night on the beach, it's fun to have a glance upwards.

**What's the sky like at night in your hometown?**

Oh, like I said, there's a lot of light pollution in the more built-up areas. So you can get a good view of the starscape the further away you are, like in the village where I live, for example.

**Can you see the moon and stars where you live?**

Well, you can in Dundee, you can even make out the constellations in the Northern Hemisphere if you look hard enough, and everything comes into focus. And the moon is also quite bright most of the time, unless there's lots of cloud cover. This is less so in Moscow, you can only usually see the brightest stars in the sky, if ever.

**Do you like to watch stars?**

I liked it more when I was a child. Now my feet and eyes are sort of more rooted on terra firma. I think I should probably start doing it again and try and recapture the magic actually.

**Have you ever taken a course about stars?**

Not an official one. But I remember my dad telling me how to locate various constellations like Orion's Belt in the nearby nebula.

**Is it important to study stars?**

Well, probably not as much as it used to be for the bulk of people. I suppose, if you're an astronomer or an astrologist or an astrophysicist, then it's probably important. Everything else people can find out on the internet now.

**What's your favorite star?**

I used to like looking up to find Orion's belt, which is actually three stars. It's just for fun, though. And it's interesting how they line up like that, from our perspective. I think further out in the universe, they aren't actually arranged in a straight line that way.

**Light pollution (noun)**  - the glow from street and domestic lighting that obscures the night sky and hinders the observation of faint stars.

**Glance (verb)**  - to give a quick short look.

**Built** - up (adj.)

**Starscape (noun)**  - a view of the stars visible in (a particular part of) the sky.

**Make out (phrasal verb)**  - if you make something out, you manage with difficulty to see or hear it.

**Constellation (noun)**  - any of the groups of stars in the sky that seem from earth to form a pattern and have been given names.

**Cloud cover (noun)**  - the state of the sky when it is covered with cloud.

**Terra firma (noun)**  - dry land, when compared with the sea or air.

**Recapture (verb)**  - if something recaptures a previous emotion or style, it makes you experience that emotion again or it repeats that style.

**Nebula (noun)**  - a cloud of gas or dust in space, appearing either bright or dark.

**The bulk of sth.**  - most of something.

**Primary School**

**Rory, did you like primary school?**

Well, not overly so. I used to act up a bit and I was constantly getting in trouble and being reprimanded. I didn't really come into my own until after high school.

**Act up (phrasal verb)**  - if a person, especially a child, acts up, they behave badly.

**Reprimand (verb)**  - to express to someone your strong official disapproval of them.

**Come into your own**  - to be very useful or successful in a particular situation.

**Drop off someone/something (phrasal verb)**  - to take someone or something, esp. by car, to a particular place.

**Catchment area (noun)**  - the area served by a school.

**Climbing frame (noun)**  - a large frame made of bars that children can climb on.

**Bark chippings (noun)**  - small pieces of tree bark used chiefly for pathways in gardens or woodland.

**Relaxing**

**Switch off (phrasal verb)**  - to stop giving your attention to someone or something.

**Into the bargain**  - in addition to other facts previously mentioned.

**Rewind (verb)**  - to go back, or to make something go back, to an earlier time.

**Investment (noun)**  - the act of putting money or effort into something to make a profit or achieve a result.

**Recharge (verb)**  - to get new energy or to give new energy to something.

**Make-up**

**Rory, do you wear make-up?**

Well, no, I don't think it's very common for men. Actually, the first last and only time I've ever worn makeup was about 15 years ago when I did some modeling for a friend. And that was the strangest experience. The makeup that used felt like it was like, like wall paint being applied to my face. You could feel it like filling the pores. It wasn't very nice.

**What does wearing make-up mean to you?**

Well, I'm not quite sure what you mean. If we're talking about what it involves. Then we could talk about doing your eyelashes applying lipstick, wearing concealer. If you're talking about who or what it's for, I think it's mostly about enhancing female attributes, especially on the face, though that's probably very Western way of seeing it, I suppose.

**Do you give make-up as a gift?**

Oh, I think I have a very long time ago. But it's not something I usually buy since I'm not exactly au fait with cosmetics. I'm much better at books or jewelry.

**What do you think when you see a man wearing make-up?**

Well, I imagine it depends on the kind. A lot of actors wear make-up and it's quite important for how they work with a camera as I understand it. And then sometimes male actors and pantomimes wear overblown amounts of it for a comedic effect. And I think some drag performers wear women's make-up as part of their personas for similar reasons.

**To apply (verb)**  - to spread or rub a substance such as cream or paint on a surface.

**Pore (noun)**  - a very small hole in the skin of people or other animals, or a similar hole on the surface of plants or rocks.

**Concealer (noun)**  - a type of make

**To enhance (verb)**  - to improve the quality, amount, or strength of something.

**Attribute (noun)**  - a quality or characteristic that someone or something has.

**To be au fait with smth**  - to be familiar with or know about something.

**Cosmetics (plural noun)**  - substances put on the face or body that are intended to improve its appearance or quality.

**Overblown (adj.)**  - made to seem more impressive or important than is the case; exaggerated or pretentious.

**Persona (noun)**  - the aspect of someone's character that is presented to or perceived by others.

**To get smth out of smth (phrasal verb)**  - to obtain something, esp. a good feeling, by doing something.

**Mirrors**

**Rory, how often do you look at yourself in the mirror?**

Well, I have to every day when I fix my hair and put on moisturizer to make sure everything is evened out and in the right place. And then, I suppose inadvertently whenever I've been to the bathroom, since there are mirrors on the walls, and you can't really avoid them when you have to wash your hands.

**Do you have mirrors in your home?**

I have a wall mirror in the bathroom and a full-body one in my home in Scotland. It's set into the wardrobe so it's quite handy when you're getting dressed actually.

**Do you think mirrors are a necessary decoration?**

Well, I've never really thought about it until now, but I suppose you're right. Many people have them in their entrance halls at home, in the bathroom and the bedroom. Some people have them on their desks. I suppose. It's a bit like curtains really when you think about it. You don't really focus on them much. But you would notice if they weren't there.

**Do you often buy mirrors?**

op drinking your coffee and answer the question.R: I have never bought one in my life actually. They always seem to come with the places that I've stayed in. I don't know where you would even buy one. Like a specific mirror shop, probably. Furniture store or something like that.

**Where do you put mirrors?**

Well, it's probably easier to say where you don't put them really. They should be at eye level and in rooms or places where inspecting your face is part of the routine there. So the bathroom and the bedroom are the most obvious so you can check when you go out, and the vestibules or the foyers so you can check yourself out before entering a place with other people. There are places that break with this convention like shoe shops for example, where they have mirrors at foot level so you can look at your, well, you can see how your new footwear looks.

**Rory, do you have a mirror in your bag?**

No, I don't. I have on my phone. I can look at the reflection of my phone if I need to.

**Do you think you should have a mirror in your bag or in your pocket?**

Well, for me personally no. But I suppose for other people if they feel like they need to check their face or their make-up regularly then they can.

**Inadvertently (adj.)**  - in a way that is not intentional.

**Handy (adj.)**  - useful or convenient.

**Wardrobe (noun)**  - a tall cupboard in which you hang your clothes.

**To inspect (verb)**  - to look at something or someone carefully in order to discover information, especially about their quality or condition.

**Vestibule (noun)**  - a small room just inside the outer door of a public building where you can leave your coat, etc.

**Foyer (noun)**  - a large open area just inside the entrance of a public building such as a theatre or a hotel, where people can wait and meet each other.

**Convention (noun)**  - a way of doing something or appearing that is considered usual and correct.

**Footwear (noun)**  - shoes, boots, or any other outer covering for the human foot.

**Reflection (noun)**  - the image of something in a mirror or on any reflective surface.

**Generic (adj.)**  - shared by, typical of, or relating to a whole group of similar things, rather than to any particular thing.

**Ornate (adj.)**  - having a lot of complicated decoration.

**Politeness**

**Well mannered (adj.)**  - behaving in a pleasant and polite way.

**Fraught (adj.)**  - causing or having extreme worry or anxiety.

**Foul (adj.)**  - foul speech or other language is offensive, rude, or shocking.

**Maternal (adj.)**  - related to a mother's side of the family.

**Neurotic (adj.)**  - behaving strangely or in an anxious (= worried and nervous) way, often because you have a mental illness.

**Well behaved (adj.)**  - behaving in a way that is accepted as correct.

**To put off (phrasal verb)**  - if something puts you off something, it makes you dislike it, or decide not to do or have it.

**Well brought up (adj.)**  - people, especially children, who are well brought up are polite and act in a quiet and pleasant way, because they have been taught this behaviour at home.

**Well bred (adj.)**  - speaking or behaving in a way that is generally considered correct and polite.

**To scandalize (verb)**  - if you are scandalized by someone's behaviour, you disapprove of it and are shocked by it because you think it is against moral laws.

**Mobile Apps**

**Rory, do you like using apps?**

Um, it's not so much a question of liking it or no, I have to use them to live in the world these days, whether it's staying in touch with family or, well, using messaging apps to communicating with fans on social media. I like the utility but I resent the distractions they inflict.

**Utility (noun)**  - the usefulness of something, especially in a practical way.

**To inflict (verb)**  - to force someone to experience something very unpleasant.

**In a nutshell (idiom)**  - very briefly, giving only the main points.

**To get hold of someone (idiom)**  - to communicate with someone, esp. by telephone.

**Queue up (phrasal verb)**  - put something in order, in a line.

**To come in handy (idiom)**  - to be useful.

**Rain**

**Downpour (noun)**  - a lot of rain in a short time.

**Cloudburst (noun)**  - a sudden heavy fall of rain.

**To daydream (verb)**  - to spend time thinking pleasant thoughts about something you would prefer to be doing or something you would like to achieve in the future.

**Infamous (adj.)**  - famous for something considered bad.

**Spectrum (noun)**  - a range of different positions, opinions, etc. between two extreme points.

**Torrential (adj.)**  - used to refer to very heavy rain.

**Water cycle (noun)**  - the way that water is taken up from the sea, rivers, soil, etc. and then comes back down as rain or snow.

**Drizzle (noun)**  - rain in very small, light drops.

**Precipitation (noun)**  - water that falls from the clouds towards the ground, especially as rain or snow.

**To spit (verb)**  - to rain very slightly.

**To flood (verb)**  - to cause to fill or become covered with water, especially in a way that causes problems.

**Depression (noun)**  - part of a surface that is slightly lower than the rest.

**Drainage (noun)**  - the system of water or waste liquids flowing away from somewhere into the ground or downpipes.

**Tiredness**

**Rory, what kinds of things make you tired?**

Well, I think a lack of sleep and food in combination with sort of time-consuming tedious or intensive tasks is quite tiring. So it's not common these days, thankfully.

**What do you do when you feel tired?**

I think it depends on where I am and what I'm doing, and maybe the level of fatigue. If I'm at home, and it's during the day, then I can stretch, have an energy drink and switch tasks and then refocus on what I was originally doing. If it's a night, then it's generally a sign it's time for bed.

**Who do you usually talk to when you feel mentally tired?**

Well, it's a similar process to when I'm physically tired, I have to evaluate what I'm doing. Sometimes it's just a case of, I don't know switching things up. Though other times it's assigned the task is actually pointless, at least in its present form, and I need to do something more engaging to liven things up a bit.

**Lack of sth**  - the fact that something is not available or that there is not enough of it.

**Time** - consuming (adj.)

**Tedious (adj.)**  - boring.

**Intensive (adj.)**  - involving a lot of effort or activity in a short period of time.

**Tiring (adj.)**  - making you feel tired.

**Fatigue (noun)**  - extreme tiredness.

**Switch up (phrasal verb)**  - to change, usually in a way that brings an improvement.

**To liven up (phrasal verb)**  - to make something more interesting or attractive.

**Wiped out (adj.)**  - extremely tired.

**Markets**

**Roro, Ruru, do you like to go to street markets?**

I like it when I go on holiday like to pick up some trinkets or souvenirs for people back home. Otherwise, like a more targeted shopping experience in online stores or shops is what I prefer.

**How often do you go to markets?**

Whenever I'm on holiday, and there's one to hand it's fun to go with whoever I'm with. You can find and see and even experience lots of different things.

**Tell me about an outdoor market you've been to?**

Well, there's one based around the high street in Wa, which is a town in the Upper West Region of Ghana. You can find just about anything there. From phones to spare parts for scooters and motorbikes. I can remember wandering around this sort of ramshackle stores in this sort of chaotic grid pattern looking for a fan and a kettle. I needed them for when I lived at the school nearby. And we found them eventually, but it took ages because nothing is well signposted there.

**Which do you prefer markets or shopping malls?**

Shopping malls without question. Especially now in the summer when the air conditioning comes in handy. That aside the layout, it's more logical, and it's easier to follow than the mess that usually characterizes even small markets. You really have to hunt around in them to find what you want, especially if you don't live there. And that can be a huge waste of time.

**Do many people go to markets in your country?**

I imagine they don't as much as they used to since there are ongoing restrictions. But under normal circumstances, it's quite common, especially if you live in or near the countryside. And sometimes they get set up in towns or cities for the people there.

**Have your shopping habits changed over the years?**

**Trinket (noun)**  - a small decorative object, or a piece of jewelry that is cheap or of low quality.

**Souvenir (noun)**  - something you buy or keep to help you remember a holiday or special event.

**To hand**  - near and able to be used.

**To wander (verb)**  - to walk around slowly in a relaxed way or without any clear purpose or direction.

**Ramshackle (adj.)**  - badly or untidily made and likely to break or fall down easily.

**Chaotic (adj.)**  - confused, with no order.

**To signpost (verb)**  - to show the direction of something on a signpost.

**Come in handy**  - to be useful.

**Layout (noun)**  - the way that something is arranged.

**To hunt (verb)**  - a search for something or someone.

**Ongoing (adj.)**  - continuing to exist or develop, or happening at the present moment.

**Window shopping**  - the activity of spending time looking at the goods on sale in shop windows without intending to buy any of them.

**To sidetrack (verb)**  - to direct a person's attention away from an activity or subject towards another one that is less important.

**Islands**

**Notion (noun)**  - a belief or idea.

**The mainland (noun)**  - the main part of a country or continent, not including the islands around it.

**To nestle (verb)**  - to be in, or put something in, a protected position, with bigger things around it.

**Archipelagos (noun)**  - a group of small islands or an area of sea in which there are many small islands.

**Have your fill of something (idiom)**  - to have or experience as much as you want of something.

**To fancy (verb)**  - to want to have or do something.

**Coast (noun)**  - the land next to or close to the sea.

**Interior (noun)**  - the land that is furthest away from the outside or coast of a country or continent.

**Seldom (adverb)**  - almost never.

**Amusement parks**

**Roro, do you like amusement parks?**

If I'm honest, not really. I remember going to Disneyland as a preteen and absolutely loathing it. Partially because I was a bit of a bookworm. But more so I found it really artificial and claustrophobic with all the crowds and everything. So it's not really my thing at all.

**How often do you go to amusement parks?**

Well, these days almost never. In fact, I don't think I've been anywhere near one since, well, since the time I described you there. Um, I'd need to think about it in more depth probably.

**When was the last time you went there and what did you do?**

Well, now that I think about it after that experience in Disneyland, I wasn't overly keen to have another outing to an amusement park. But I think there was one since then, I think the last time I was even close to somewhere remotely like it was when I went to this place in Spain with a bunch of rollercoasters in the usual, I don't know, amusement park fair. I wasn't very taken with it then either. To be honest.

**What do you usually do at an amusement park?**

Moan about it and want to leave. If you mean what people do generally, though, they go on the rides and live vicariously through others, if you're an adult, watching your kids, or they try and dodge the crowds. It's a shame I find it's such a downer, actually, because there, there's more to fairgrounds than just rollercoasters and crowds. Like the VR simulators look good as do those sort of lighter rides. It's maybe just the overstimulation that does me in, to be honest.

**Are there many amusement parks where you live?**

Um, I think there are a few traveling fairs and circuses, but nothing sort of on the scale of Disneyland. And the closest thing might be the big wheel in the middle of Edinburgh. And I think that would be maybe stretching the definition of amusement park from where I stand.

**Do you think you'll go to an amusement park soon?**

**Amusement park (noun)**  - a place where people can go to enjoy games, rides, and other activities.

**To loathe (verb)**  - to hate someone or something.

**Bookworm (noun)**  - a person who reads a lot.

**Artificial (adj.)**  - made by people, often as a copy of something natural.

**Claustrophobic (adj.)**  - used to refer to a person suffering from a fear of being in closed spaces.

**Rollercoaster (noun)**  - a small railroad, esp. in an amusement park, with open cars that travel quickly along a steep, curved track that goes up and down over and over.

**Ride (noun)**  - a machine in an amusement park that people travel in or are moved around by for entertainment.

**Vicariously (adverb)**  - in a vicarious way (= experienced through the activities of other people, rather than by doing something yourself).

**To dodge (verb)**  - to avoid something unpleasant.

**Fairground (noun)**  - a large outside area used for public events.

**Overstimulation (noun)**  - the fact of being made too excited or interested in something, or a situation in which someone feels like this.

**Fair (noun)**  - an outside event where you can ride on large machines for pleasure and play games to win prizes.

**Getting lost**

**Have you ever got lost?**

Isn't there a joke about men never getting lost, they just use their own directions. Seriously, though, I've lost my way once or twice, but it was nothing terribly serious.

**When was the last time you got lost?**

I actually despite the coincidence at the beginning, I actually did have trouble finding the studio we were working at once. I just misread the directions and wound up one street over or something like that. It was hardly a big deal. But that was the last time I was lost.

**How can you find your way when you are lost?**

Oh, GPS has saved me so many times. I usually have a reasonable sense of direction too. I'm just not very good with specific place names. But I'm very good at like navigating by sight. And of course, tall buildings make good reference points in my case.

**Are you good at reading a map when you get lost?**

Reasonably well. I wasn't great at orienteering when we were in the scouts. I'm much better at finding my way around by what I can see around me, like I said, rather than what's on a map.

**Have you ever helped someone who got lost?**

I've tried. People in Moscow always used to ask me for directions. And I always thought I gave pretty good answers to their questions. But sometimes, they would go and wander off and talk to another person probably just to double-check what I'd said.

**Do you ever use any applications with maps?**

**Wind up (phrasal verb)**  - to find yourself in an unexpected and usually unpleasant situation, especially as a result of what you do.

**Sense of direction (noun)**  - the ability to find places or to know which direction to go.

**To navigate (verb)**  - to successfully find a way from one place to another.

**By sight**  - by appearance; by recognizing but not through being acquainted.

**Reference point (noun)**  - (of location) a point used to find or describe the location of something.

**Orienteering (noun)**  - an activity in which you have to find your way to somewhere on foot as quickly as possible by using a map and a compass.

**Wander off (phrasal verb)**  - to leave from someone or something.

**To head (verb)**  - to go in a particular direction.

**Handwriting**