

Skills tests audio scripts

SKILLS TEST 1

Part 1

Speaker 1

I remember we visited Egypt, many years ago now. It was incredibly hot and we were traveling with a tour. We took a boat trip down the Nile River, and one night we had obviously eaten something bad ... because everyone got ill with terrible diarrhea. And the next day on the little minibus ... it was just awful. People kept asking the driver to stop so they could get out, and you know ... And we were at the Valley of the Kings visiting some of the pyramids out in the desert – in the middle of nowhere. And I suddenly needed to use the restroom, except of course, there wasn't a restroom! So I tried to find a place, but found myself surrounded by young boys grabbing my arm and hissing, "speak English, speak German?" to try and find out where I was from. They wanted to sell me souvenirs. I can laugh now ... but at the time, it was pretty awful!

Speaker 2

I was working for a charity in China. Not in a city – it was a long way from anywhere, out in the countryside. I hadn't been out there long, and everything was new and interesting. I spent my time, when I wasn't teaching, hiking, and exploring the villages. One Saturday, I was at a local market, buying vegetables and looking around. There were people selling all kinds of stuff. I stopped at a stall with live animals – rabbits and chickens – only to find that the woman was skinning the live rabbits right in front of me; she had a big iron pot, and was clearly going to use the rabbits to make a soup or stew. I'm not a vegetarian, but I still found this very hard to watch. I still have a very clear memory of this woman at the market stall, although it was some time ago now ...

Speaker 3

I'd gone off to Bali to visit a friend who was living there. She took a couple of days off work so we could do some hiking in the mountains. As we were reaching the top, a whole party of schoolchildren started coming down the mountain, chattering and laughing – we had to stand back and wait to let them all pass. Then everything went quiet again. But suddenly out of nowhere, we found ourselves surrounded by monkeys. They were blocking our path – sitting in the trees and watching us. The head monkey started screaming loudly and jumping around, encouraging the other monkeys to join in. We were both absolutely terrified, and didn't know what to do. We tried to move forward slowly, but this resulted in another loud outburst from the monkeys. After what seemed like hours, we quietly agreed that we should try to go back down the mountain the way we had come. This seemed to work – which was a huge relief!

Part 2

Speaker 1

I've been a diehard vegetarian for as long as I can remember – not because I don't like the taste of meat, but because I believe it's wrong to kill animals. Actually ... the problem is that I love chicken, and it's always been the hardest thing to give up. Anyway ... while I was in college – studying in my final year – I was working extremely hard. I was working for hours on end which made me a complete insomniac. Gradually, during those weeks before exams started, I became obsessed with fried chicken – especially late at night when I couldn't sleep. This obsession became so bad that I couldn't concentrate on my work. So, um ... one night I just ... gave in. I got on my bike and rode to this all-night fried chicken place and I bought a family-sized bucket of chicken. And I ate it all in about five minutes. I felt pretty sick after I'd done it – physically, I mean. And I felt really bad with myself, too. I mean, I'd let myself down. I've never told anyone this before, actually.

Speaker 2

A few years ago, I made everyone in our house throw out their cell phones. My son and daughter would spend hours chatting away night and day, phones glued to their ears. Both of them were spending a fortune on phone bills. Then my son started complaining about headaches. I didn't think too much about this, since I get migraines from time to time, and so does his dad. So ... anyway ... I was talking to a friend over coffee, and she told me that cell phones can give you cancer. I had never heard anything about this before – and I went crazy. I spent hours on the Internet researching articles ... I joined chat rooms ... and in the end, even though our local doctor tried to assure me that there was no evidence at all that cell phones could give you cancer, I threw away everyone's cell phone. My husband and kids were extremely annoyed of course. Unfortunately, my son's headaches didn't stop – so then I had to accept that it couldn't be the cell phones – and I felt very silly!

housing development, and we went around stealing, breaking into people's houses. We didn't see it as wrong. Anyway, the first couple of times I went to prison, it was for small stuff. And I knew plenty of people who had gone to prison, so I wasn't bothered about going there. And when I came out, I just kept on messing around, doing the same things.

- I** And when did things go terribly wrong?
- M** Well ... I started hanging out with a seriously bad crowd of people. And they were into bigger things – you know – like selling drugs. And that's another world, really. It's big time crime, with people getting hurt ... and I was part of that. So, I ended up in trouble with the police again. But this time, I didn't get off so easily.
- I** That's right. So this time you were sentenced to eight years. And what did you think when this happened?
- M** I made up my mind to change my ways. You know, to be a good person. A prison adviser actually said to me, "You should try and learn something while you're here – get some training." And I liked this person, so I listened to him, and decided "yes, I am going to learn something this time."
- I** Because you left school without graduating, is that right?
- M** Yeah, absolutely. I thought school was a complete waste of time, and I left at 16.
- I** But then in prison, the third time, you tried ... 20 different courses!
- M** Yes, I did! I wasn't sure what I'd be good at, so I needed to try a lot of things to find out. So, I did woodworking, cooking, car mechanics, business studies ... the list goes on. But then I started a course in Equine Management ...
- I** What does that mean?
- M** It means looking after horses. At level 1, we were learning basic skills like how to clean and prepare the stables, and take care of the horses. And as soon as I started the course, I knew this was it. This was the turning point for me.
- I** OK! And I suppose you did well on the course?
- M** Yes, I did! I moved through the levels really quickly – and hardly any of the other prisoners were interested in equine management. So the course organizers were pleased with me for being so hard-working, and let me spend a lot of time with the horses.
- I** So by the end of level 4, what could you do?
- M** Well, I chose to specialize in horse breeding – so when I got out of prison, I started an apprenticeship at a breeder's. And from there, I've moved on to starting up my own business.
- I** And what's been your recipe for success?
- M** I dunno, really ... um ... a huge amount of enthusiasm ... hard work ... and doing something you feel passionately about. The amazing thing is though – I would never have had this opportunity if I hadn't gone to prison.

SKILLS TEST 2

I=Interviewer M=Mark

- I** Good afternoon, and welcome to *What's New This Week?* We're going to start with our guest, Mark Tyler. He's a successful horse breeder, but you've been to prison more than a couple of times, haven't you, Mark?
- M** That's right, Susan. The first two were short sentences – just a few months, and a bit of community service too. But the third time was for eight years.
- I** So tell us a bit about your early life. How did you end up going to prison?
- M** Well ... It was really common in my group of friends to do certain things ... We all grew up in the same public

I Thank you for coming to talk to us today, Mark.

SKILLS TEST 3

I=Interviewer **B**=Barbara

- I** Tonight we have here in the studio with us, Barbara Parker, a lifestyle adviser. Barbara, what is it exactly that you do?
- B** Hi, Kevin, good evening. Basically, what I do is help people discover their dreams, then help them find a way to achieve them.
- I** I hope you don't mind me saying but I don't really see what that might involve.
- B** Right. You'll probably agree that the key to happiness in life is to be able to do that you love doing. Something that you've always dreamed of doing. But once you leave college and adult life kicks in, you have to earn a living. So you go through life, in a never-ending loop, making money just to make money. You no longer know what your dream is because you don't have time to contemplate it. Worse still is that you can never feel fulfilled – since you no longer have ambitions that you could fulfil.
- I** Which sounds depressing.
- B** It does, doesn't it ... but you should never give up! Free your mind and think about what your life should be like five or ten years from now. Anything goes here. Just make a list of everything you'd love to have around you: people, a home, furniture, objects, possessions, a career ... anything. This is the question you must ask yourself every morning when you wake up: where do you want your life to go? That is going to be your dream. The more real you make it seem in your mind, the more likely it is that you will make it happen.
- I** OK. What then?
- B** You need to give it all a little bit of thought. Think about your hobbies, your passions. Whatever it is you like spending your time with, without pay, is what your passion is. Consider whether you'd love to do your passion for a living. If so, in what professions? What do you need to do first to get into those professions? Learn as much as you can. Become an expert on the subject. Devote time to your dream every single day.
- I** Sounds like a lot of hard work to me.
- B** You can say that again. Your dream won't make itself come true – you'll need to put in the effort yourself. In order to help you on your journey, you'll need a map – a plan, in other words. You might want to try backwards planning. Start with your goal. What do you need to do last just before you reach your goal? And what do you need to do before then? And so on until you reach the first logical step. When you've identified it, focus all your efforts on that first step. It's easy to become distracted and lose purpose. So you must simplify your life, and keep your focus on just that crucial first step. Break up your journey into small steps –

and always concentrate on the next one, and nothing else.

- I** You make it sound so easy, but if anything went wrong, you'd have to go back to square one, wouldn't you?
- B** No. You have to believe you cannot fail. Pretend that you can't. By acting as if that was true, slowly but surely you'll make it true. Even if you stumble and fall, believe that you'll always get up and learn from that fall. Live the way you want people to think of you, to remember you – live your life working on realizing your dreams. You'll make progress with every little thing you do towards those dreams.
- I** I love your optimism, Barbara, but let's look at a few practical examples now ...

SKILLS TEST 4

Extract 1

- Husband** Hello.
- Wife** Oh, hi! You back already?
- Husband** What do you mean? It's 6:30. And how come you're here so early?
- Wife** I just got here, too. Did football finish early or something?
- Husband** I don't know. Did it?
- Wife** You did pick Jamie up, didn't you? Jamie?
- Husband** What?! I thought you were going to do that.
- Wife** You're kidding me, right? You are kidding, Jamie?
- Husband** No ... I'm ... no ...
- Wife** Oh my goodness, you're not kidding. Sean! You promised.
- Husband** No I didn't. When do I ever pick him up from football?
- Wife** I told you I had a meeting over by city hall till 5:30 and I wouldn't be able to get him today. YOU were supposed to drop by the football field on your way home. I can't believe you forgot. You're so unreliable. Once, just once, I ask you to do something and you can't even manage that.
- Husband** How could I forget to do something I never said I'd do? When exactly do you think we discussed this?
- Wife** Oh I see! It's my fault now, is it? Right, well, in that case I guess I'd better fix this then. Give me the car key. And call the coach.

Extract 2

- Dave** Steve! Excellent. You made it. Come in! ... How are you doing? It's been a long time.
- Steve** I know. I'm good, thanks. How are you?
- Dave** I'm all right. Who's this, then?
- Sarah** I'm Sarah.

- Dave** Oh, you're Sarah? Oh, nice to meet you finally. You're just here for the weekend?
- Sarah** Yep. Flying visit. We have a packed couple of days ahead of us, too.
- Steve** Yeah, so sorry Dave, buddy, but we can't stay long, cuz we've gotta be up at the crack of dawn tomorrow.
- Dave** Fair enough. Just glad you're here – to be honest, I didn't think you were coming.
- Steve** Well, we nearly didn't. But then I thought, I'm starving and I'd love a free meal!
- Dave** Ha! Don't hold your breath – you can fill up on chips if you want. Come sit with us for a minute, though. Through here. And Sarah – I'll introduce you to Fay. She's dying to meet you!
- Sarah** Great! Steve tells me that we went to the same college. I might even recognize her ...

Extract 3

- R = Receptionist**
- R** Hello, Red Box Storage Solutions. How can I help you?
- Wendy** Hello, could you put me through to Andy, please?
- R** Do you have an extension number for him?
- Wendy** Um ... yes. Hold on one second ... OK, yes. Here it is: 4021.
- R** OK, thank you. I'll put you through now. Please hold.
- Andy** Hello. Andy speaking.
- Wendy** Andy – hi! It's Wendy here. How are things?
- Andy** Oh – Wendy ... Hi there. Listen, I have my hands full right now ...
- Wendy** Well, I just wanted to talk about the weekend, because we're having a small get together ... and I haven't heard from you in a while ... and I was wondering how you are ...
- Andy** Um ... I'd love to talk. But this isn't really a good time. I'm late for a meeting, you see.
- Wendy** Oh, I see. OK. Well, don't worry. I won't keep you. But will you call me back later?
- Andy** Sure, sure. I'll do that, Wendy. I'll talk to you soon. Bye for now.
- Wendy** Bye, Andy. Don't forget to call!

Extract 4

- Mike** Hello. Mike Stanford speaking.
- Nelly** Hi Mike. It's Nelly Campbell.
- Mike** Hi there, Nelly, how are you doing?
- Nelly** Great, thanks. And yourself?
- Mike** Yes, things are pretty busy right now. But everything's good!
- Nelly** That's good to hear. Anyway, I just wanted to see if you can still make the meeting on the 23rd.
- Mike** Oh, um ... just hold on a minute, while I check my calendar ... Oh, no. I'm afraid something's come up. It looks like I can't make it after all.

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Nelly Never mind. Perhaps we could reschedule it now, while I've got you.
Would the first Monday in February work for you?

Mike Monday the 3rd? Yes, that should be OK ... Oh, actually... no, sorry.

Nelly OK, then. How about the following Monday?

Mike Yes ... that sounds doable. Can I get back to you to confirm? I just need to check on something first.

Nelly No problem! I'll email you an agenda in the meantime.

Mike Great! Look forward to seeing it.

Nelly Bye, then!

Nelly Bye!

Extract 5

Sophie Oh no!

Matt What's up?

Sophie It's this stupid application form. It keeps crashing.

Matt What are you applying for?

Sophie State College, of course. The deadline's in two weeks.

Matt Oh right. Hmm.

Sophie What?

Matt No nothing.

Sophie WHAT?

Matt It doesn't matter. You know what I think about it. I just don't get it. I don't get why you wanna go to college.

Sophie Well, why wouldn't I? How else am I gonna become a doctor?

Matt It's just ... there's more to life than shoving your nose in a book for four years. That's all. It's not for me. I can't be bothered with all that. Not right now, anyway.

Sophie No, you'll just float along, doing whatever, living off other people.

Matt Why does this bother you so much? I don't have to go to college if I don't want to. It's not as if a degree is any good these days anyway.

Sophie I don't know. Maybe I'm just thinking of Mom and Dad – I doubt they ever planned on having their youngest son living under their roof well into his forties.

Matt Oh, don't exaggerate. Look, I'm not stopping you from going to college. Why don't you just get back to your application if that's what makes you happy.

Sophie Yeah, I will, thanks. And shut the door behind you, please ...

We're still only planning it. We got engaged four years ago now, but there's no rush – we're both pretty sure the other's the one. Clara, that's my fiancée, she's always said she wanted to do it on top of the Empire State Building ... I think there's an old movie that she really likes ... anyway, I have a fear of heights, and she's already said she won't be disappointed with a conventional ceremony at our local church. The reason it's taking us so long to organize is that Clara's family's from Venezuela and mine's from Estonia as well as the US, but we live in England ... getting everyone together in the same place is a bit of a nightmare, not to mention we both speak English, but not all of our families do.

Speaker 2

I've been dreaming about my big day ever since I was a little girl. I want it to be unusual, something that no one's really done before ... I don't see what's wrong with wanting to be different ... I heard about people doing it underwater, you know, with scuba gears and everything ... and some other people had theirs in a fast-food restaurant ... which is just silly, if you ask me ... I'm not sure ... my dreams keep changing from time to time. What I'm obsessed with at the moment is South-East Asia ... I heard you could exchange vows on top of an elephant in this safari park in Bali ... so right now that's what I'd do if I were ... you know ... in that sort of situation ...

Speaker 3

I doubt the day will come very soon, but I believe in taking life as it comes. We'll just think of something there and then. I don't believe in a long courtship, and there are so many factors to take into account. Anyway, you just never know when it's the right time. We'll probably end up making a decision, then grasp the moment and just go for it. We might as well invite a few friends and family and make it into a party, but I wouldn't want to go to great pains to organize something complicated. Whatever we feel like doing – I don't feel strongly about what the ceremony should be like, one way or the other. You know, spontaneously, like in Las Vegas – except I really wouldn't want to end up in Las Vegas ... that would drive me crazy.

Part 2

Speaker 4

It was the most memorable day of my life, for sure. Seven years exactly to the day ... which reminds me, I've got to get those earrings for her later ... we went to this blissfully remote island off the coast of Brazil, Fernando de Noronha, it's called ... you know, white sandy beaches, romantic wooden beach huts for sleeping in, crystal clear waters ... We held the ceremony on the beach at sunset, surrounded by palm trees and the sound of the waves lapping at the shore, wonderfully far from everything ... We were both so insanely happy we didn't hear a word the official

was saying, but I still remember he had this big booming voice ... Yes, it was definitely the best day in my life, so tonight we have a good reason to celebrate.

Speaker 5

My wife's Tunisian, so we had no choice but to do it there, with all her family and friends. I had my parents and my two sisters with me, but none of my friends could make it ... which is such a shame. It was loud, it was colorful ... it was marvelous. It lasted for several days. My wife wore a gold dress at one point, with this image of a hand with an eye on it ... Fatima's hand, they said, which I guess is fitting as my wife's also named Fatima. The weirdest but most touching moment for me was when they spun her around in front of me, in that gold dress, and she had her eyes closed, and when she opened them, she was facing me ... as if it was the first time she saw me, her new husband. Apparently, they used to do this a long time ago, but it's not very common nowadays.

SKILLS TEST 5

Part 1

Speaker 1