

Part 5 USE OF ENGLISH

Family road trips

By Ben Robinson, aged 16

I'm just going to say this once, for the record: when you're travelling by car somewhere with your family, even when you're six years old, the chances are you know full well that you're not 'there yet,' even as you're asking over and over 'Are we there yet?' And anyway, the truth of the matter is, once you get there it's not 'there' anymore, is it? It's 'here'. So if you really think there's a chance that you're 'there' yet, you should be asking 'Are we *here* yet?' And I'm pretty sure there's no one who wishes they were 'there yet' more than the mums and dads fielding that question over and over every single long car trip.

I mean, seriously – what are us kids complaining about? Just think about it. Wouldn't you prefer to be lounging in the back seat, with nothing being demanded of you? So you watch endless DVDs that you've never seemed to get round to seeing before, listen to music, perhaps indulge in a few of the puzzles you've had for ages but not done, as the scenic vistas roll on by endlessly outside the window.

And acting as co-pilot in the passenger seat, map in hand, there'll be mum or dad, whose function is to dole out juice boxes, and cookies, or to adjust the radio station and temperature to whatever is requested – in short, to keep it all running smoothly and be the on-the-road concierge! Are we there yet? I hope not.

That is, of course, until someone in the car does something unthinkable – in my case generally my younger brother, Tim. Something like ... putting his foot on my side of the seat. What? He can't do that! So I put my foot on his side. And then it's his other foot, and then a hand, and next thing you know he's hurled his whole body over into my space and a fight has erupted.

And the driver and co-pilot start reaching back and separating us as the car accelerates and swerves. They heatedly tell the younger sibling off, saying he should stay in his own seat and keep his hands to himself. This restores civility for a while. And the scenic wonders, steeped in history, continue rolling by.

line 43

And pretty soon after that, I'm trying to read, and suddenly I feel something – a draught blowing across my arm. But the car's not going that fast and the window's not even open. So where's it coming from? My vengeful sibling is in the next seat, discreetly but purposefully channeling his breath onto me. He's on his side, perfectly legitimately, not touching me – so he's got me on a technicality. Just breathing. What's the problem with that? The anger escalates. Tim gets yelled at, there's more swerving. Then slowly the madness subsides again – for now.

line 53

line 54

Over the years, Dad's developed strategies for dealing with us kids on the back seat. For example, his response to the question 'Are we there yet?' has frequently been, 'Yup. We're here. Get out of the car.'

'But Dad. We're still on the highway, going 70 miles an hour.'

'Oh, well, then maybe we're not there yet.' That kept everyone quiet for a while. Mind you, you can tell when you're finally 'there' when you see the grown-ups tumble out of the car and go as far away as they can from the kids who've tormented them for all those hours. So once and for all, please note: if mum and dad are still near enough to answer your question, then the answer is: no. You're not there yet.

- 31 What is Ben doing in the first paragraph?
- A explaining his poor behaviour when travelling
 - B revealing his dislike of lengthy car journeys
 - C giving an example of a source of annoyance on trips
 - D describing a strategy to make journeys pass quickly
- 32 What is Ben's attitude to the activities he does during the journey?
- A He regards them as a bit of a waste of time.
 - B He regrets that they distract him from the views outside.
 - C He admits they are not ones he would enjoy doing at home.
 - D He takes advantage of being free from other obligations.
- 33 How does Ben behave towards his younger brother Tim during a journey?
- A He overreacts to trivial things that Tim does.
 - B He deliberately encourages Tim to continue to fight.
 - C He places the blame for any arguments on Tim.
 - D He tricks Tim into misbehaving.
- 34 What does 'This' refer to in line 43?
- A the speed of the car
 - B the adults' response
 - C the fight
 - D Tim's behaviour
- 35 What does 'he's got me on a technicality' mean in lines 53 and 54?
- A He has taken pleasure in Ben's discomfort.
 - B He has used the rules to defeat Ben.
 - C He has managed to spoil Ben's journey.
 - D He has realised what has annoyed Ben.
- 36 In the final paragraph, Ben reveals his
- A lack of understanding of his dad's sense of humour.
 - B sympathy for what his parents have endured.
 - C concern that he has pushed his parents too far.
 - D resentment at his parents' wish to distance themselves.

PART 6 USE OF ENGLISH

Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

The importance of birdsong

Do you enjoy listening to birdsong and, if so, how often do you *really* listen to it? One of the pleasures I share with my grandfather is a love of birds, and in particular listening to their different songs. Some people who hear a bird singing say 'That sounds lovely', without feeling any need to identify the bird in question. Others, including dedicated bird-watchers, will hear the song and immediately set about trying to identify the bird. **37** After all, the next interesting species is sure to turn up soon. My grandfather takes yet another approach.

Recently we made a plan. We decided that once a week or so, we'd go down to the wetlands near where we live, take a hot drink and sit and listen to a species of bird called the sedge warbler. Out on empty wetlands, you can't help but hear these creatures. We don't concern ourselves with whether they're male or female, or what exactly they're doing. **38** Although they may not sing as beautifully as some other birds, they're still worth paying attention to.

In fact, if you look at a scientific analysis of their song, you find that they sing for an entire minute without stopping, and in that time, they will utter around 300 syllables. **39** They will introduce up to ten new syllables in that section. And some analysts say that the music they make is so intricate that they never sing the same song twice.

However, actually being able to hear birdsong is becoming more of a challenge these days as the air is increasingly filled with the noise of machines and traffic. **40** But then we also risk missing natural sounds, and those, it seems, are important for our well-being. Studies have shown that exposure to white noise negatively affects our concentration and stress levels.

Listening to birdsong is the perfect antidote. Recent research has shown what many of us have always thought. **41** There's also evidence that it can lead to a reduction in anxiety levels, particularly useful in hospital environments, for example. These benefits have also been recognised in locations such as airports. One airport has started to play birdsong to passengers in its quiet lounge, where people can unwind before flights, and so far, feedback has been very positive.

Birdsong is also a great reminder that despite human activity, much of which can severely affect their habitats, there are entire communities of birds that are thriving – and living independently alongside us. As birds go about their daily business of laying eggs, raising chicks and finding food, they aren't concerned with us in the least. We may be the centre of our own worlds, but we are most certainly not the centre of theirs. **42** Indeed, seeing the world from a non-human perspective helps us to reconnect with nature and enables us to see the bigger picture.

- A** It provides physical relaxation as well as mental stimulation.
- B** The objective is rather to listen to the song as another example of how amazing nature can be.
- C** It can be a key indicator of the health of the bird population.
- D** The only solution is to wear headphones and block it all out.
- E** The middle of the song is the most complex.
- F** That is something we should be more aware of.
- G** Having done so to their satisfaction, they'll move on.

PART 7 USE OF ENGLISH

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

Which person

describes the opportunity they were given to analyse challenging films?

43

admits their approach wasn't typical of the way new directors tend to behave?

44

believes that it is necessary to change the subject matter of their films regularly?

45

mentions the challenging environment they had to work in?

46

says that they don't want to criticise filmmakers in a different working environment?

47

admits they had difficulty mastering one skill required for their work?

48

describes a technique that they use to create a particular atmosphere in their films?

49

explains how they aren't limited by certain demands that other filmmakers have to meet?

50

enjoys writing about complex personalities that may not be easy to like?

51

mentions how the actors need to feel committed to what they are doing?

52

Young film directors

A Laurence Yuen

My main task is to come up with a narrative that everyone finds engaging. It's all down to the quality of that story because, if a director isn't working in Hollywood or somewhere like that, there might not be the budget to pay the cast what they deserve. This means they all need to believe passionately in the story that's being told and want to come to work every day despite the lack of financial reward. I'd never knock people employed by the big studios because some fantastic films are made there, but independent filmmakers like me have greater freedom, so we can tell more unusual stories without worrying too much about the need to make money or please huge audiences. For example, I like creating characters that are different from what you might typically see in big Hollywood movies and which don't always conform to stereotypes.

B Daisy Morgan

I didn't start out with an interest in making animated films, but I gradually realised there was potential in that field. I struggled initially and it took me a good six months to get the hang of it. When most directors make their first animated feature film, they keep things fairly modest. I didn't scale back or limit my ambition even though we ended up having to do the filming in a confined space – it was really cramped. A vital part of the process of writing a film is finding someone to do it with – someone who on a basic level you're compatible with, but doesn't have exactly the same way of doing things. What almost defeated me was the writing, actually. My first few drafts were too long and needed a huge amount of editing, which was hard to take because very promising material had to be cut.

C Antonio Rossi

As a teenager, I'd watch teen movies and then I'd get fed up and, with my parents' encouragement, would watch some of their movies as well and discuss them in detail. This exposed me to complex, sophisticated filmmaking at an early age. Some directors choose to limit themselves to particular themes because it brings them success and popularity. But I try to shake things up when I can – it's the only way to improve, I think. Attending film festivals is a great way of getting direct audience feedback on your work, but having said that, I try not to worry too much if people react negatively towards my films. If I do that, then it starts to block my creativity. I'd love to write a comedy and I thought at one time it might be an easy option. It's not difficult to write what you personally find funny, but trying to write something that everyone else will find equally amusing is a different thing completely.

D Anna Svensson

I prefer writing and directing drama because it gives me the opportunity to create characters full of contradictions – characters that audiences won't necessarily warm to. I often include scenes without dialogue, which adds to the tension and suspense. I love the opportunity to create strong emotional responses in people, particularly by unexpectedly changing the way the viewer feels about a character. Getting hold of the best cameras and lighting is a challenge when you haven't got a huge budget. Trying to decide on what camera to use is sometimes a bit tricky too. We've found that with an inexperienced cast bigger cameras can be off-putting and intrusive. Several top directors may have influenced my work, and I don't think you can hide that from anyone. In the early days I may have stolen some ideas from them, but I didn't see that I was doing it. Even so, it's a bit embarrassing when I look back at my first attempts at filmmaking.