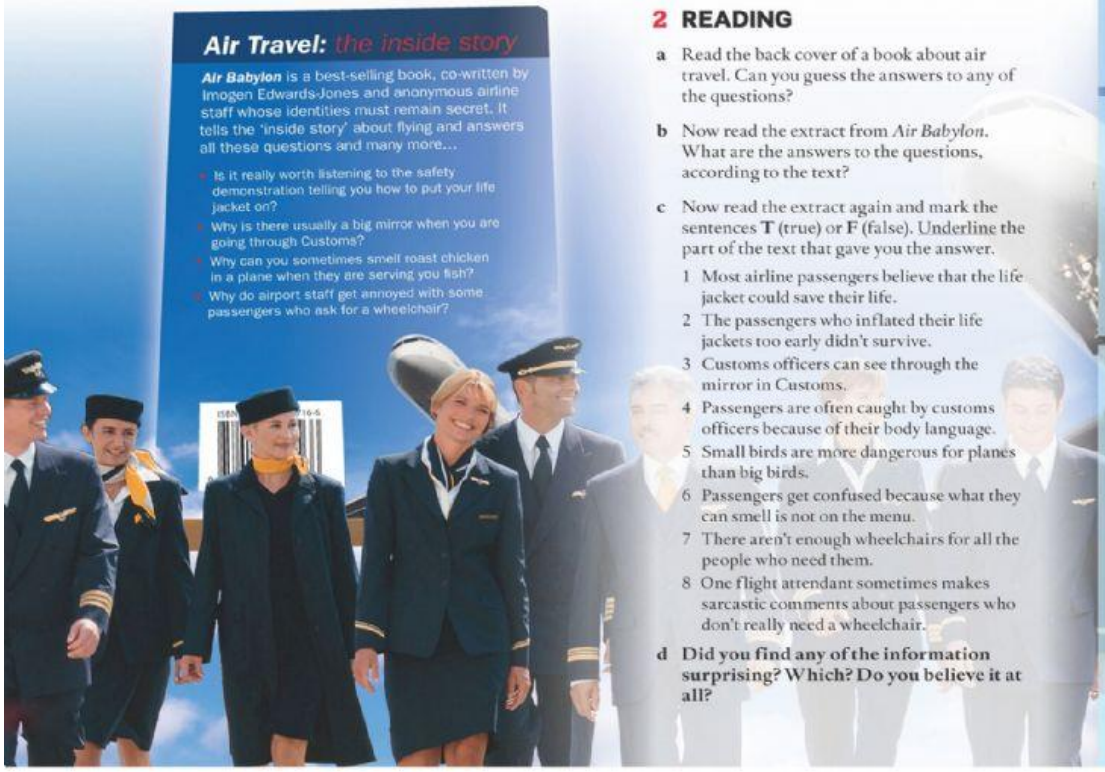
1 LISTENING & VOCABULARY air travel

Listen to some in-flight announcements and match them to pictures A–D. What information or instructions are the passengers being given?

Listen again. What word or phrase do the flight attendants use to mean…?

1 *small bags and cases*
2 the *cupboards above your seat*
3 *put on* your seat belt
4 *phones, tablets*, etc.
5 *the doors* where you can get out of the plane quickly if there is a problem
6 the *thing you have to put on* if the plane is going to land on the sea
7 to *blow air* inside something



2 READING

a Read the back cover of a book about air travel. Can you guess the answers to any of the questions?

b Now read the extract from *Air Babylon*. What are the answers to the questions, according to the text?

c Now read the extract again and mark the sentences **T** (true) or **F** (false). Underline the part of the text that gave you the answer.

1 Most airline passengers believe that the life jacket could save their life.
2 The passengers who inflated their life jackets too early didn't survive.
3 Customs officers can see through the mirror in Customs.
4 Passengers are often caught by customs officers because of their body language.
5 Small birds are more dangerous for planes than big birds.
6 Passengers get confused because what they can smell is not on the menu.
7 There aren't enough wheelchairs for all the people who need them.
8 One flight attendant sometimes makes sarcastic comments about passengers who don't really need a wheelchair.

d Did you find any of the information surprising? Which? Do you believe it at all?

Most airline passengers think it is laughable that a small yellow life jacket with a whistle will make any difference if the plane crashes into the sea. However, in some cases, like when a hijacked Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 767 landed in the Indian Ocean in 1996, it did. Despite instructions from the cabin crew not to pre-inflate their lifejackets inside the plane, several passengers did. They were unable to escape the rising water inside the plane. But others, who followed the pilot's instructions, survived. So it is probably a good idea to look up from your magazine when the flight attendant is giving the safety demonstration.

Customs officers are watching everywhere. They are watching you from the moment you walk off the plane, while you are standing in Baggage Reclaim waiting for your bag, and especially when you come out the other side of Customs, which is when people who are trying to smuggle something finally let their guard down and get caught. The large two-way mirror in Customs, (behind which customs officers sit and watch) is part of that process. As you walk past, it makes you look taller and thinner. So you feel good about yourself and you relax and smile. That's when a customs officer suddenly appears and asks you to open your case…

Birds are one of the major problems for any airport when planes are taking off and landing. Any large bird can easily cause an accident. It flies into the engine, totally destroying itself and the machinery. Smaller birds are less of a problem. In some cases they can do some damage, but usually they are just roasted. When this happens, there is often such a strong smell of roast bird that passengers on the plane think that chicken is being cooked, and they are often surprised when they're given a choice of fish or beef at dinner!

Wheelchairs are a big problem for airline staff. Not only is there always a shortage of them for the people who really need them, but worse still, some of the people who request them often don't need them at all. I've lost count of the number of times I have pushed someone through the airport, taken them through Customs and Passport Control, got a porter to pick up their luggage, and then seen the person jump up in Arrivals and move quickly towards their waiting relatives. One flight attendant I know gets so annoyed when this happens that as soon as the passenger gets out of the chair she shouts to the other passengers, 'Ladies and gentlemen! Another miracle, courtesy of the airline industry! After years in a wheelchair, he walks again!' The passenger is normally so embarrassed that he (and it's usually a 'he') disappears as quickly as he can.

From Air Babylon by Imogen Edwards-Jones

LIVEWORKSHEETS